THE CIRCLE CHARTER SCHOOL

#95-0627

1995 Charter School Application

Basic Fact Sheet

This basic Fact Sheet will be used by the Executive Office of Education to conduct quick analysis of the applications received. The information furnished below must be accurate, and must correspond to that which is provided in the body of the proposal. This information will serve to provide reviewers at the Executive Office of Education with a snapshot of your proposal.

THE CIRCLE CHARTER SCHOOL
Proposed Charter School Name

Ashland
School Location (city/town)

Contact Person

First Mary Beth Middle none Last Merritt

Organization The Circle School Address 433 Maple Street

City Franklin, State MA Zip 02038

Telephone (508) 520-2444 Fax ( )

Founding Coalition: *(Check Box)*

Parents	Teachers	Private For-Profit Business

Community Based Organization	Museum	Other Founding Group
		X

Grade Level *(Check Box)*

Elementary	x
Middle	x
Secondary	x
Other Grade Level	

Projected Student Enrollment

Projected Student Enrollment (1st Year)	50
Projected Student Enrollment (2nd Year)	75
Projected Student Enrollment (3rd Year)	100
Projected Student Enrollment (4th Year)	100
Projected Student Enrollment (5th Year)	150
Total Number of Teachers	6FT ?PT
Teacher/Student Ratio	1:25at most

In what type of community will the Charter School be located?

Urban School District		Rural School District	
Suburban School District	X	Other Kind of Community	

Do you presently have access to a facility suitable for a school?

Yes [ ] No [X]

School Focus:
In succinct terms, describe the focus and primary characteristics of your proposed school and/or students to be served, (i.e., math & science, arts, school-based services, at-risk youth, college preparatory, basic skills, interdisciplinary learning, and competency-based learning).

The Circle Charter School is a multi-age, ungraded community school serving the needs of children ages 5-15 in a developmentally appropriate, child-centered setting. We will use the theories of Human and child development to support the natural learning rhythms of children in a a context of becoming ecologically literate, whole persons.

Executive Summary (one page):
To help the Executive Office of Education accurately portray your charter school proposal to the public, please attach a one page description of your school. This description should outline, in clear terms, the educational model to be employed; the replicability of that model; student demographics; and other characteristics setting this school apart from other traditional public schools. Above all, this summary should capture the vision of the founders.

Executive Summary

The Circle Charter School-A Collaborative Learning Community

The Circle Charter School's mission is to be a model for student centered developmentally appropriate education that focuses on the growth of the individual in relationship to the community and the environment. We seek to nurture the development of the whole child; one who demonstrates a capacity for thoughtfulness, caring, imagination and responsibility as well as being conscious and effective learners.

We believe that within each person is a seed of greatness, that with the proper and appropriate care, will blossom and bear fruit. The goal of the Circle Charter School is to develop a learning community that addresses the unique learning styles and intelligences of each child as well as responding appropriately to their stages of development We will be practicing theories developed by Piaget, Pearce, Steiner, the Luvmours, and Markova and Powell. We will be interacting with Nature as a springboard for an emergent curriculum to help develop the skills, knowledge, values and behavior that are paramount to being a fully expressed human being. Our educational plan could be considered an interdisciplinary Liberal Arts program that addresses learning and growth in all domains : cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual. We will use authentic assessment tools and encourage students to become increasingly responsible for their own learning. The following is a synopsis of our objectives:

1.Read, write, and communicate effectively individually and in groups
2.Define, analyze and solve complex problems individually and in groups
3.Acquire, integrate and apply knowledge individually and in groups
4.Study and work effectively individually and in groups
5.Display of self-knowledge and understanding
6.Students will develop qualities of ecological literacy as they live and learn within the context of an eco-learning system. We will nurture a deep and abiding love for the natural world, an ability to understand the complex interactions of whole systems and an appropriate view of the place of humanity in the web of life.
7.Students will be independent learners, exhibiting the characteristics of self-discipline, initiative, curiosity, creativity and thoughtfulness as well as respect, honesty, responsibility, and caring.

We believe that there is a need for the demonstration of the ability of public schools to meet the needs of individuals and society in a life affirming way. Our intent is to develop a "living and learning" center that would be available to the general public as a resource. Further, our school will serve as an observation facility for other teachers and school systems who would like to learn about our practices. Finally we will be offering professional development workshops by leaders in the fields whose practices we are adopting.

Our proposed school is in the Metrowest area, potentially in Ashland Ashland is an economically developed suburb of ca. 12,000 which spends about $5,000 per student. There is a diverse population consisting of 3.5% Hispanic, 2.5% African American, 2.1% Asian American and 91.9% white.To increase the potential pool of diverse applicants, we hope to draw from surrounding towns, particularly Framingham which has a population of 14.2% Hispanic, 8.0% African American, 5.1% Asian American and 72.8% white.

Submitted by Mary Beth Merritt,contact person, 433 Maple Street,Franklin,MA 02038

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Submitted by Mary Beth Merritt,contact person
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1995 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

The Circle Charter School
A Collaborative Learning Community

1. Mission Statement

A.The Charter School's mission is to be a model for student centered developmentally appropriate education that focuses on the growth of the individual in relationship to the community and the environment. We seek to nurture the development of the whole child; one who demonstrates a capacity for thoughtfulness, caring, imagination and responsibility as well as being conscious and effective learners.

We believe that this mission is in alignment with the Mission Statement of the Massachusetts Board of Education as stated in 1992: "to provide each and every child with the values, knowledge and skills needed to achieve full potential in his or her personal and work life and to contribute actively to the civic and economic life of our diverse and changing democratic society." (publication # 176011-4-580,000-9/94 DOE, Mass. Dept. of Ed.)

We hold certain beliefs that inform our model of education and are necessary to achieve the goals implicit in the mission of public education.

We believe that it is necessary to take into account the development of the whole child and must use language that is often missing from reform rhetoric. The values of community, cooperation, honesty, justice, equality, compassion, peace, harmony, understanding and love need to be infused into our modern culture and thus into the educational experiences of all children[1]. This speaks to nurturing the spirit of the child, that essence which is the sum that is greater than its parts. We offer this as the beginning to a possible solution to the current crisis of meaning that is present in our culture. (See also

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[1]The Global Alliance for Transforming Education, Education 2000 A Holistic Perspective

"What Beliefs Form the Basis of the Common Core of Learning?" Publication # 176011-4-580,000-9/94-DOE Mass. Dept, of ED.)

We believe that each child has a unique way of learning and expressing which points to a need for curriculum and assessment to be appropriate to and authentic for the individual. Current brain research findings point to natural learning rhythms inherent in each child, supported by evidence of brain growth patterns and observable and measurable multiple intelligences. Each stage of development calls for consciously addressing the unique needs of the student. The great educational researchers, philosophers, and authors, Joseph Chilton Pearce[2] and Rudolph Steiner[3] speak, as does Jean Piaget, and the Luvmours[4] of the stages of growth and learning that are universal and yet so individual in their development. They also speak to the need for each stage to be completed before the next to begin so that each succeeding stage is built upon firm foundations that rest in many domains, such as the physical, emotional and cognitive. The approach to teaching and learning here is to allow each child to develop according to her own patterns of interest and pace and for the teacher to be attuned to those proximal moments that are seminal to further growth and deeper understanding. Additionally, Howard Gardner's[5] work in Multiple Intelligences and Markova and Powell's[6] work in Thinking Patterns allows us to clearly view and respect these individual's learning and expressing modes and help guide us in choosing appropriate teaching and assessment methods.

Finally, we believe that it is essential to the success of individuals and society that we function as a collaborative learning community - a vibrant living system that emulates the principles and values inherent in natural ecosystems.[7] Examples of these are:

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[2]Pearce,Joseph Chilton, Education for Higher Stages of Development: A Survey of the Evolution, Biology and Development of the Spirit, Holistic Education Review 7(4) 1994

[3]Almon,Joan, The needs of Children in the 1990's:Nurturing the Creative Spirit, Holistic Education Review 7(4) 1994

[4]Luvmour, Josette and Sambhava, Natural Learning Rhythms 1993 Celestial Arts, Berkeley California

[5]Gardner, Howard, The Unschooled Mind 1991 Basic Books div. of Harper Collins

[6]Markova,Dawna and Powell,A., How Your Child is Smart 1992 Conari Press, Berkeley California

[7]Cooper,Carole, What Are Learning Communities?, Guide to Ecoliteracy: A New Context for School Restructuring

1.Partnership - all members of the learning community cooperate and work in partnership, which means democracy and empowerment because each plays a vital role. Further, in a partnership, entities co-evolve to continue to meet the needs of each other and the community.

2.Diversity - in all of it's manifestations is crucial to the development of a true and rich community and to give it strength.

3.Interdependence - in a learning community, students, parents, teachers, administrators, businesses and community are all interlinked in a network of relationships, working together to facilitate learning and growth.

4.Cycles - teaching does not flow from the top down, there is a cyclical exchange of information. The focus is on learning and everyone in the system is both teacher and learner. Further, the learning environment is re-created as the need arises.

5.Sustainability- the idea that "we teach who we are"-an awareness of the profound and longlasting effects that teachers/ adult role models have on students and that we all have on our world.

Our practices will be informed by all of these ideas.

"We need a spiritual revolution on this planet, the upgrading and validation of individual human life, the recognition that each individual is a precious, sacred entity of divine, heavenly, or cosmic origin, meant during a short life of consciousness to fulfill a meaningful function. No human being should be left without meaning, without a contribution to the human ascent toward a peaceful, fulfilled, Godly, human society on this planet."
---Robert Muller, former Assistant Secretary General to the UN

In this spirit, we embark on a great exploration.

B. Our impact on public education in Massachusetts

The Education Reform act calls for innovative learning and teaching methods as well as accountable outcomes. The Education Reform Act calls for self-determination at the site level and the Charter School Regulations call for replicable models . We will demonstrate these by:

1.providing the evidence that a public institution can be responsive to individual needs in ways that are life affirming.

2.providing a model for the appropriateness of fostering learning within many contexts including significant study, work and service projects outside the school.

3.providing a model for a new paradigm in education : teacher as co-learner and facilitator.
4.providing a model for a meaningful and significant parental role in the education of children.
5.demonstrating a model of governance that teaches the principles of democracy.
6.providing opportunities for district and out of district schools to observe and learn about our practices.

2.School objectives

"Overemphasis on the competitive system and premature specialization on the ground of immediate usefulness kills the spirit on which all cultural life depends, specialized knowledge included.

The competitive mentality prevails in schools and destroys feelings of human fraternity and cooperation. It conceives of achievement not as derived from the love of productive and thoughtful work, but as springing from personal ambition and fear of rejection.

The purpose of education is to nurture thoughtfulness. The lesser function of thinking is to solve problems and puzzles. The essential purpose is to decide for oneself what is of genuine value in life and then to find the courage to take your own thoughts seriously."

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."
--Albert Einstein

"The goal of public education is for all [children] to lead productive, fulfilling and successful lives in our complex, diverse and changing world." -- Massachusetts Board of Education 1992

A.The charter school has as it's main academic objectives for student learning the following:

The demonstration by a variety of appropriate vehicles the mastery of skills, knowledge, values and behaviors necessary for living and successful continued education, entrance into employment or other pursuit relevant to the student (eg., travel,apprenticeship). Specifically, over a period of time that allows for an individual's unique approach to the construction of knowledge, milestones will be measured that are in accordance with the Massachusetts Common Core of Learning, (See Common Core of Learning and Curriculum Frameworks as set forth and promulgated by the Education Reform Act of 1993) to include, but not limited to:

1.Read, write, and communicate effectively individually and in groups
2.Define, analyze and solve complex problems individually and in groups

3.Acquire, integrate and apply knowledge individually and in groups
4.Study and work effectively individually and in groups
5.Display of self-knowledge and understanding

B. The non-academic goals for student learning are as follows:

1.Students will be independent learners, exhibiting the characteristics of self-discipline, initiative, curiosity, creativity and thoughtfulness as well as respect, honesty, responsibility, and caring. See Gate document following.

2.By being in an environment that honors and supports diversity of individuals, their learning styles and backgrounds, students will learn and practice respect.

3.A student's involvement in non-traditional learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships, community service and walk-abouts, as well as self-assessment will foster responsibility for themselves and to their community.

4.Students will learn the value of reflective thought, purposeful communication and action that reflects a consideration of the common good. We will not just study the hallmarks of a democratic society we will embody it and live it. How can a child learn about democracy without the experiences of freedom and shared decision making?

5.Students will develop qualities of ecological literacy as they live and learn within the context of an eco-learning system. We will nurture a deep and abiding love for the natural world, an ability to understand the complex interactions of whole systems and an appropriate view of the place of humanity in the web of life.

EDUCATION 2000

A Holistic Perspective

I. The Vision Statement

Preamble

We are educators, parents, and citizens from diverse backgrounds and educational movements who share a common concern for the future of humanity and all life on Earth.

We believe that the serious problems affecting modern educational systems reflect a deeper crisis in our culture: the inability of the predominant industrial/technological worldview to address, in a humane and life-affirming manner, the social and planetary challenges that we face today.

We believe that our dominant cultural values and practices, including emphasis on competition over cooperation, consumption over sustainable resource use, and bureaucracy over authentic human interaction have been destructive to the health of the ecosystem and to optimal human development as well.

As we examine this culture-in-crisis, we also see that our systems of education are anachronistic and dysfunctional. In sharp contrast to the conventional use of the word *education*, we believe that our culture must restore the original meaning of the word, "to draw forth." In this context, *education* means caring enough to draw forth the greatness that is within each unique person.

The purpose of this Statement is to proclaim an alternative vision of education — one which is a life-affirming and democratic response to the challenges of the 1990s and beyond. Because we value diversity and encourage a wide variety of methods, applications, and practices, it is a vision toward which educators may strive in their various ways. There is not complete unanimity, even among those of us who endorse this document, on all of the statements presented here. The vision transcends our differences and points us in a direction that offers a humane resolution to the crisis of modern education.

Principle I. Educating for Human Development

We assert that the primary — indeed the fundamental — purpose of education is to nourish the inherent possibilities of human development. Schools must be places that facilitate the learning and whole development of all learners. Learning must involve the enrichment and deepening of relationships to self, to family and community members, to the global community, to the planet, and to the cosmos. These ideas have been expressed eloquently and put into practice by great educational pioneers such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, Dewey, Montessori, Steiner, and many others.

Unfortunately, public education has never had optimal human development as its primary purpose. Historical literature makes it clear that school systems were organized to increase national productivity by inculcating habits of obedience, loyalty, and discipline. The "restructuring" and "excellence" literature of the 1980s and 1990s continues to be permeated with a concern for the productivity and competitiveness of the national economy, and seeks to harness the abilities and dreams of the next generation to the goal of economic development. We believe that human development must be served before economic development.

We call for a renewed recognition of human values which have been eroded in modern culture — harmony, peace, cooperation, community, honesty, justice, equality, compassion, understanding, and love. The human being is more complex, more whole, than his or her roles as worker or citizen. If a nation — through its schools, its child welfare policies, and its competitiveness — fails to nurture self-understanding, emotional health, and democratic values, then ultimately economic success will be undermined by a moral collapse of society. Indeed, this is happening already, as is made clear by the drug epidemic and the pressing problems of crime, alcoholism, child abuse, political and corporate corruption, teen alienation and suicide, and violence in the schools. We must nurture healthy human beings in order to have a healthy society and a healthy economy. The economic system surely requires a skilled, dependable work force. We can best secure this work force by treating young people as human beings first and future workers secondarily. Only people who live full, healthy, meaningful lives can be truly productive. We call for a greater balance between the needs of economic life and these human ideals which transcend economics and which are necessary for responsible action.

Principle II. Honoring Students as Individuals

We call for each learner — young and old — to be recognized as unique and valuable. This means welcoming personal differences and fostering in each student a sense of tolerance, respect, and appreciation for human diversity. Each individual is inherently creative, has unique physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs and abilities, and possesses an unlimited capacity to learn.

We call for a thorough rethinking of grading, assessment, and standardized examinations. We believe that the primary function of evaluation is to provide feedback to the student and teacher in order to facilitate the learning process. We suggest that "objective" scores do not truly serve the learning or optimal development of students. We have been so busy measuring the measurables that we have neglected those aspects of human development which are immeasurably more important. Besides neglecting important dimensions of all learners, standardized tests also serve to eliminate those who cannot be standardized. In successful innovative schools around the world, grades and standardized tests have been replaced by personalized assessments which enable students to become inner directed. The natural result of this practice is the development of self-knowledge, self-discipline, and genuine enthusiasm for learning.

We call for an expanded application of the tremendous knowledge we now have about learning styles, multiple intelligences, and the psychological bases of learning. There is no longer any excuse to impose learning tasks, methods, and materials *en masse* when we know that any group of students will need to learn in different ways, through different strategies and activities. The work being done on multiple intelligences demonstrates that an area of strength such as bodily kinesthetic, musical, or visual spatial can be tapped to strengthen areas of weakness such as linguistic or logical-mathematical.

We question the value of educational categories such as "gifted," "learning disabled," and "at-risk." Students of all ages differ greatly across a full spectrum of abilities, talents, inclinations, and backgrounds. Assigning these labels does not describe a learner's personal potentials, it simply defines one in relation to the arbitrary expectations of the system. The term "at-risk" is especially pernicious: It serves to uphold the competitive, homogeneous goals of the educational system by ignoring the personal experiences and perceptions which lie behind a particular student's difficulties. We suggest, instead, that schooling should be transformed so as to respect the individuality of every person — that we can build a true learning community in which people learn from each other's differences, are taught to value their own personal strengths, and are empowered to help one another. As a result, each learner's individual needs will be met.

Principle III. The Central Role of Experience

We affirm what the most perceptive educators have argued for centuries: education is a matter of experience. Learning is an active, multisensory engagement between an individual and the world, a mutual contact which empowers the learner and reveals the rich meaningfulness of the world. Experience is dynamic and ever growing. The goal of education must be to nurture natural, healthy growth through experience, and not to present a limited, fragmented, predigested "curriculum" as the path to knowledge and wisdom.

We believe that education should link the learner to the wonders of the natural world through experiential approaches that immerse the student in life and nature. Education should connect the learner to the workings of the social world through real-life contact with the economic and social life of the community. And education should acquaint the learner with the realm of his or her own inner world through the arts, honest dialogue, and times of quiet reflection — for without this knowledge of the inner self, all outward knowledge is shallow and without purpose.

Principle IV. Holistic Education

We call for wholeness in the educational process, and for the transformation of educational institutions and policies required to attain this aim. Wholeness implies that each academic discipline provides merely a different perspective on the rich, complex, integrated phenomenon of life. Holistic education celebrates and makes constructive use of evolving, alternate views of reality and multiple ways of knowing. It is not only the intellectual and vocational aspects of human development that need guidance and nurturance, but also the physical, social, moral, aesthetic, creative, and — in a nonsectarian sense — spiritual aspects. Holistic education takes into account the numinous mystery of life and the universe in addition to the experiential reality.

Holism is a reemerging paradigm, based on a rich heritage from many scholarly fields. Holism affirms the inherent interdependence of evolving theory, research, and practice. Holism is rooted in the assumption that the universe is an integrated whole in which everything is connected. This assumption of wholeness and unity is in direct opposition to the paradigm of separation and fragmentation that prevails in the contemporary world. Holism corrects the imbalance of reductionistic approaches through its emphasis on an expanded conception of science and human possibility. Holism carries significant implications for human and planetary ecology and evolution. These implications are discussed throughout this document.

Principle V. New Role of Educators

We call for a new understanding of the role of the teacher. We believe that teaching is essentially a vocation or calling, requiring a blend of artistic sensitivity and scientifically grounded practice. Many of today's educators have become caught in the trappings of competitive professionalism: tightly controlled credentials and certification, jargon and special techniques, and a professional aloofness from the spiritual, moral and emotional issues inevitably involved in the process of human growth. We hold, rather, that educators ought to be facilitators of learning, which is an organic, natural process and not a product that can be turned out on demand. Teachers require the autonomy to design and implement

learning environments that are appropriate to the needs of their particular students.

We call for new models of teacher education which include the cultivation of the educator's own inner growth and creative awakening. When educators are open to their own inner being, they invite a co-learning, co-creating process with the learner. What teaching requires is an exquisite sensitivity to the challenges of human development, not a prepackaged kit of methods and materials. We call for learner-centered educators who display a reverence and a respect for the individual. Educators should be aware of and attentive to each learner's needs, differences, and abilities and be able to respond to those needs on all levels. Educators must always consider each individual in the contexts of family, school, society, the global community, and the cosmos.

We call for the debureaucratization of school systems, so that schools (as well as homes, parks, the natural world, the workplace, and all places of learning) can be places of genuine human encounter. Today's restructuring literature emphasizes "accountability," placing the teacher at the service of administrators and policy makers. We hold instead that the educator is accountable, above all, to the young people who seek a meaningful understanding of the world they will someday inherit.

Principle VI. Freedom of Choice

We call for meaningful opportunities for real choice at every stage of the learning process. Genuine education can only take place in an atmosphere of freedom. Freedom of inquiry, of expression, and of personal growth are all required. In general, students should be allowed authentic choices in their learning. They should have a significant voice in determining curriculum and disciplinary procedures, according to their ability to assume such responsibility. However, we recognize that some instructional approaches will remain largely adult-guided due to philosophical convictions or because they serve special student populations. The point is that families and students need to be free to choose such approaches, and free not to.

Families should have access to a diverse range of educational options in the public school systems. In place of the current system which offers a handful of "alternatives," public education should be comprised of numerous alternatives. It must no longer be the mission of public education to impose a homogenized culture on a diverse society. There is still a need for non-public schools, which tend to be more receptive to far-reaching innovations, and which are more capable of embodying the values of particular religious or other closely knit communities. Families should have freedom to educate their children at home, without undue interference from public authorities. Home schooling has proven to be educationally, socially, and morally nourishing for many children and families.

Principle VII. Educating for a Participatory Democracy

We call for a truly democratic model of education to empower all citizens to participate in meaningful ways in the life of the community and the planet. The building of a truly democratic society means far more than allowing people to vote for their leaders — it means empowering individuals to take an active part in the affairs of their community. A truly democratic society is more than the "rule of the majority" — it is a community in which disparate voices are heard and genuine human concerns are addressed. It is a society open to constructive change when social or cultural change is required.

In order to maintain such a community, a society must be grounded in a spirit of empathy on the part of its citizens — a willingness to understand and experience compassion for the needs of others. There must be a recognition of the common human needs which bind people together into neighborhoods, nations, and the planetary community. Out of this recognition there must be a concern for justice. In order to secure these high ideals, citizens must be enabled to think critically and independently. True democracy depends on a populace able to discern truth from propaganda, common interests from partisan slogans. In an age when politics are conducted via "sound bytes" and deceptive public relations, critical inquiry is more vital than ever to the survival of democracy.

These are all educational tasks. Yet the teaching/learning process cannot foster these values unless it embodies them. The learning environment must itself revolve around empathy, shared human needs, justice, and the encouragement of original, critical thinking. Indeed, this is the essence of true education; it is the Socratic ideal, which has rarely been realized in educational systems.

Principle VIII. Educating for Global Citizenship

We believe that each of us — whether we realize it or not — is a global citizen. Human experience is vastly wider than any single culture's values of ways or thinking. In the emerging global community, we are being brought into contact with diverse cultures and worldviews as never before in history. We believe that it is time for education to nurture an appreciation for the magnificent diversity of human experience and for the lost or still uncharted potentials within human beings. Education in a global age needs to address what is most fully, most universally human in the young generation of all cultures.

Global education is based on an ecological approach, which emphasizes the connectedness and interdependence of nature and human life and culture. Global education facilitates the awareness of an individual's role in the global ecology, which includes the human family and all other systems of the earth and universe. A goal of global education is to open minds. This is accomplished through interdisciplinary studies, experiences which foster understanding, reflection and

critical thinking, and creative response. Global education reminds us that all education and all human activity need to rest on principles which govern successful ecological systems. These principles include the usefulness of diversity, the value of cooperation and balance, the needs and rights of participants, and the need for sustainability within the system.

Other important components of global education include understanding causes of conflict and experiencing the methods of conflict resolution. At the same time, exploring social issues such as human rights, justice, population pressures, and development is essential to an accurate understanding of the causes of war and conditions for peace.

Since the world's religions and spiritual traditions have such enormous impact, global education encourages understanding and appreciation of them and of the universal values they proclaim, including the search for meaning, love, compassion, wisdom, truth, and harmony. Thus, education in a global age addresses what is most fully and universally human.

Principle IX. Educating for Earth Literacy

We believe that education must spring organically from a profound reverence for life in all its forms. We must rekindle a relationship between the human and the natural world that is nurturing, not exploitive. This is at the very core of our vision for the twenty-first century. The planet Earth is a vastly complex, but fundamentally unitary living system, an oasis of life in the dark void of space. Post-Newtonian science, systems theory, and other recent advances in modern thought have recognized what some ancient spiritual and mythological traditions have taught for centuries: The planet, and all life upon it, form an interdependent whole. Economic, social, and political institutions must engender a deep respect for this interdependence. All must recognize the imperative need for global cooperation and ecological sensitivity, if humankind is to survive on this planet. Our children require a healthy planet on which to live and learn and grow. They need pure air and water and sunlight and fruitful soil and all the other living forms that comprise Earth's ecosystem. A sick planet does not support healthy children.

We call for education that promotes earth literacy to include an awareness of planetary interdependence, the congruence of personal and global well-being, and the individual's role and scope of responsibility. Education needs to be rooted in a global and ecological perspective, in order to cultivate in younger generations an appreciation for the profound interconnectedness of all life. Earth education involves a holistic assessment of our planet and the processes that sustain all life. Central to this study are knowledge of basic support systems for life, energy flows, cycles, interrelationships, and change. Earth education is an integrative field including politics, economics, culture, history, and personal and societal change processes.

Principle X. Spirituality and Education

We believe that all people are spiritual beings in human form who express their individuality through their talents, abilities, intuition, and intelligence. Just as the individual develops physically, emotionally, and intellectually, each person also develops spiritually. Spiritual experience and development manifest as a deep connection to self and others, a sense of meaning and purpose in daily life, an experience of the wholeness and interdependence of life, a respite from the frenetic activity, pressure and over-stimulation of contemporary life, the fullness of creative experience, and a profound respect for the numinous mystery of life. The most important, most valuable part of the person is his or her inner, subjective life — the self or the soul.

The absence of the spiritual dimension is a crucial factor in self-destructive behavior. Drug and alcohol abuse, empty sexuality, crime and family breakdown all spring from a misguided search for connection, mystery, and meaning and an escape from the pain of not having a genuine source of fulfillment.

We believe that education must nourish the healthy growth of the spiritual life, not do violence to it through constant evaluation and competition. One of the functions of education is to help individuals become aware of the connectedness of all life. Fundamental to this awareness of wholeness and connectedness is the ethic expressed in all of the world's great traditions: *"What I do to others I do to myself."* Equally fundamental to the concept of connectedness is the empowerment of the individual. If everyone is connected to everyone and everything else, then the individual can and does make a difference.

By fostering a deep sense of connection to others and to the Earth in all its dimensions, holistic education encourages a sense of responsibility to self, to others, and to the planet. We believe that this responsibility is not a burden, but rather arises out of a sense of connection and empowerment. Individual, group, and global responsibility is developed by fostering the compassion that causes individuals to want to alleviate the suffering of others, by instilling the conviction that change is possible and by offering the tools to make those changes possible.

Conclusion*

As we approach the twenty-first century, many of our institutions and professions are entering a period of profound change. We in education are beginning to recognize that the structure, purposes, and methods of our profession were designed for an historical period which is now coming to a close. The time has come to transform education so as to address the human and environmental challenges which confront us.

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*This conclusion is *The Chicago Statement on Education* adopted by eighty international holistic educators at Chicago, Illinois in June 1990.

3.Statement of need

A. The need for this type of school.

We are not aware of any public school that gives back so much of the responsibility of purposeful education to the students, parents and teachers. Perhaps one of the reasons why is that the definition of a sound education is probably different for each learner and as such is difficult to be institutionalized. Yet, there is a need to demonstrate the capacity of learners under circumstances that facilitate their full development within a reconceived learning environment. Parents feel that children are being ill served by subjecting them to a standardized agenda. This model takes into account parent's and children's rights and empowers them to take responsibility for their learning. Children feel that their childhood has become empty and devoid of meaning as their natural learning abilities and intrinsic motivations are stripped away by a system of competition, rewards and punishments and again, standardization. Our children should cherish childhood and not be constantly frustrated by a school experience that does not meet their needs. Teachers need to be able to go back to practicing their craft and not be subject to the constant, top-down demands placed upon them. They are in the business of human development, not curriculum development.

B.The charter school model is an appropriate vehicle for this model for several reasons:

1.We seek to incorporate the goals of the Common Core of Learning and to utilize the Curriculum Frameworks currently being developed within a model of progressive education. We will start afresh with no old habits to break, no tradition to follow, no baggage to weigh us down, which will allow all of us to come together as co-creators.

2.We hope that this work will serve as inspiration to other public school districts to examine their own thoughts and practices with regard to learning, teaching and decision making.

3. We will provide an effective model for demonstrating the intended use of the curriculum frameworks - which is as a tool for teaching and learning.

4. The charter school model, by it's very mandate invites us to consider how we might better serve the commonwealth's citizenry. As taxpayers, shareholders and citizens we answer this call and pledge the ultimate by assuming full responsibility for the outcomes: in essence the future success of our children.

4.Profile of Founding Coalition

Mary Beth Merritt, Ph.D. Chemistry, education reform activist and parent: Mary Beth has been extensively involved in the work of redesigning educational institutions by examining the ideas, philosophies and beliefs inherent in our modern system and working to transform those that no longer serve us. She serves on the Steering Committee of the Global Alliance for Transforming Education She has been a candidate for school committee twice and has served on the Department of Education's curriculum frameworks sub-committee of PALMS for a year and a half, and was appointed to the State Advisory Council on Global Education. Mary Beth worked actively last year to educate the local public about charter schools and to inspire others to see themselves creating change.

As a result of this, several groups were formed as spin-offs of our initial charter work: The Benjamin Franklin Charter School(Peg Murphy came to some of our original working meetings), The Global Child Montessori Charter School group(Kathleen Gasbarro and Mary Beth talked extensively about the philosophies we were putting forth and a parent from Kathy's school, Kathy Iselin came to this group's working meetings last year) and Lynne Ritucci and I had worked extensively together last year and met with Mr. Ronan to talk about working together. Subsequently when the group in Uxbridge formed, Lynne joined them to support their efforts to submit a Charter proposal. Mary Beth has also lent assistance to the Heuristics Charter School proposal. This is all pointed out to highlight the deep and abiding commitment to being part of helping public education better serve the needs of children and society.

After submitting part one of the charter application last year, Dr. Merritt also made a proposal to the town of Franklin, through the Superintendent of schools to develop a pilot program that embodies many of the ideas set forth here. The Superintendent asked each school Principal to work with their School Council to consider the proposal. As a result of this, one school is developing a mechanism to promote the development of proposals from teachers and parents that offer alternatives .

Mary Beth also grew up in the field of education; her family owns and operates private, residential special education schools and she had seven years experience there. Mary Beth has also had experience teaching elementary through college level students, in Boston and at the University of MA/Amherst. Most recently, she worked with the local Mothers' Center and the Multi-cultural Center

to organize a day-long conference for the public on diversity. Mary Beth facilitated a workshop called *Revisioning Education.*

Dr. Merritt worked in the pharmaceutical industry as a lab manager, has owned her own service business and served on a team that took a loosely held group of local Mothers' Centers and transformed it into a national non-profit organization(The National Association of Mothers' Centers) with approximately 5000 members. The primary focus of her activities while serving on the Board of Trustees was to develop governance procedures(corporate by-laws), fundraising, and recruitment for the Board.

Judy O'Brien,Ph.D. Education, MBA, college teacher, therapist and HS certification pending: Judy received her Ph.D. in Education from Boston College. She is a therapist in private practice who uses story, ritual, dialogue and guided visualization with her clients to access the deeper meaning of their lives. As an adjunct faculty member at Antioch New England Graduate School, Dr. O'Brien teaches Cognitive Development and Learning Theory to elementary school teachers. In addition, she has been introducing the Storymaking process to adults and children around the country in her workshop, "Telling the Soul Story". Judy has also developed a course for children ages 7-11 called "The Storymakers". This course is designed to free the artist within, to give children an experiential opportunity to discover their inner voice-the source of their creativity. When children begin to understand that they are the creators of their life stories, it fills them with a sense of empowerment and esteem, and it frees them to seek meaningful resolutions to the conflicts that arise in their daily lives. Weaving their stories into a collective/community myth requires the ability to pay attention, listen actively and resolve conflicts. Such abilities, when developed in a magical and adventurous setting, provide the foundation for a creative lifetime.

Dr. O'Brien is also one of the founding members of the Global Alliance for Transforming Education, participated in the MIT Dialogue Project and most recently taught third grade in Hollis, New Hampshire.

Dr. O'Brien also has an extensive business background. She taught marketing at the college level for 12 years, her last position was at Simmons College. For 10 years Judy was a marketing consultant to several socially responsible non-profit organizations. She has sat on the Board of directors of 4 non-profit agencies and is active on 2 currently. In her capacity as consultant for these organizations, Judy provided focus for the organizations, identified

relevant target markets and assessed for-profit products and services.

Amelia Struthers, B.S. and M.S. Early Childhood Education, storyteller, pre-school teacher and certified elementary education: Amelia received her B.S. and M.S. from Wheelock College. For the last six years, Amelia has been creating space for children's individual expression in the arts, using music, drama, movement, storytelling and poetry at the Oxford Street Daycare Cooperative in Cambridge. A well regarded storyteller, she can be seen locally on a cable program called "Storytime with Amelia" and performs regularly at libraries and special events. Most recently, Amelia has been leading workshops for early childhood teachers in caring for the caregiver. Amelia is the co-leader of "The Storymakers" with Judy O'Brien.

Cindy Walter, MBA, MASS Blue Cross and Blue Shield and parent

Lynne Shea, RN and parent: Lynne is the parent of 3 young children. She is a parent volunteer in the classroom and has worked extensively to cultivate support in her school for an alternative education pilot program that she and Mary Beth proposed last year. Lynn is also active in the Parent Communication Council. Lynn holds a BS in Nursing from the University of Lowell and has been working in this field for 12 years.

Terri Ross, Early Childhood Education and parent: Terri is a mother of two and a child care provider, as well as being a full time student at Lesley College. She is a parent assistant teacher at the Norfolk Children's School which is the only NAEYC accredited school in the area. Terri is also active in the Franklin Area Mothers' Center and serves on several committees. She has successfully completed training in Peer Facilitating and Developmental Childcare

Lynn Barry, parent and Accounts manager: Lynn is active in the Franklin Public school system and is working to coordinate a lunchtime supervision program made up of volunteers. She also works in the field of accounting and property management for the last 8 years. Lynn is the mother of 3 children.

Advisory Council

Ron Miller, BA Liberal Arts, MA Psychology, Ph.D. History of Education, Training in Montessori, Author, Scholar, Education Reform Activist: Dr. Miller is the President and Founder of the Resource Center for Redesigning Education and editor of its book and video review catalog, *Great Ideas in Education.* He is also the President of the Board of Directors of The Bellwether School and Family Resource Center--an alternative school scheduled to open in Williston, Vermont in the fall of 1995. Ron also is an adjunct instructor, Institute for Teaching and Learning at Goddard College. Previously, Ron helped found the Global Alliance for Transforming Education, was the founding publisher and editor of *Holistic Education Review* and also founder of Holistic Education Press.

Dr. Miller's research interests are in the cultural and historical foundations of education. He views educational policy as an arena in which a society's dominant values, and its conception of human nature and human possibilities, are made most explicit. Ron is the author of the book What Are Schools For? Holistic Education in American Culture, 15 published articles in the field of education and editor of 3 books.

Anthony Gawienowski, Ph.D. former Professor of Biochemistry and current Professor Emeritus, Creativity Research: Dr. Gawienowski was a professor of Biochemistry for 36 years, 6 years at Kansas State and 30 years at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst. He did his post-doctoral work at the University of Texas with Roger J. Williams in the field of "Biochemical Individuality". In his capacity as professor and research director, Dr. Gawienowski specialized in hormones and how they relate to behavior. His research was supported by NIH, NSF, NASA and the American Cancer Society. He has published over 100 articles.

Presently, Dr. Gawienowski is working in the field of creativity research. He and his colleagues are attempting to answer deep and intriguing questions on the origins of creativity, its hallmarks, how to measure it and how to nurture it. We anticipate some exciting collaboration here.

Peter Thurrell, MS, Founder and Director of the Ecological Literacy Project: Peter has a Masters degree in Environmental Studies and is a certified HS biology teacher He is an adjunct faculty member at Antioch New England Graduate School and has twenty years experience as a deep ecology practitioner and educator. The Ecological Literacy Project(ELP) is an approach to "developing a sense of place " in students using environmental education as an

integrative framework for elementary and middle school restructuring and curriculum development. ELP themes center around fundamental human endeavors and provides teachers with tools and activities to help students engage in hands-on, integrated scientific investigations directed by the student's own curiosity and interest.

B. Mary Beth has been working on the need for educational transformation since before the advent of the Education Reform Act of 1993. Her expertise comes in the form of being able to outreach to the community and her commitment to building strong families through education She submitted a preliminary (part one) application to the Executive Office of Education last year, but was unable to complete the process for several reasons. The major one was a lack of professional teacher input which would help transform our ideas and dreams into reality. This year we have that support. Judy O'Brien is a colleague of Mary Beth's from the Global Alliance for Transforming Education and also one of it's founders. She and Mary Beth have spent many long hours of deep introspection, reading and discussion about how to create an educational model that best serves the needs of the individual and humanity. We analyzed models and compared them with what is known about children's growth and development and our own beliefs about what children need to flourish. We came to a place that indicates a need for balance and the recognition that all children need different things at different times. We could not hold forth with any one approach to raising and educating children, except to meet them where they are and nurture their innate possibilities. Judy brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience as a teacher of teachers and as an elementary teacher in a progressive public school. Judy would take the role of lead teacher and would facilitate professional development. Judy has a colleague, Amelia who shares our philosophy and who is a pre-school teacher and is certified in elementary education. She recognizes the opportunity we have to make a difference. Cindy Walter is a friend and colleague of Mary Beth's and brings 12 years of activist work as a parent in the public schools as well as extensive experience and knowledge in the field of human resource management and teaching at the graduate level. Cindy's extensive background as an executive in Human Resources will also enable us to find appropriate staff and give advice on hiring and firing and the laws that govern that, as well as being able to design benefits packages. Cindy's son, Kenny, a high school senior, is providing valuable perspectives as a student in the public system.

Ron Miller, also a founding member of GATE, is regarded to be at the forefront of thought in the field of Holistic Education. He too has been involved in the debate about serving the needs of children and has taken a national leadership role. His work has lead him to create a model holistic school in Vermont and he has offered to help us educate the public for the need for new approaches to education. Ron will be instrumental in our marketing plan and is scheduled to come talk to parents (and educators as a public service) in late February or early March. Lynn Shea has worked with Mary Beth for the last year developing a proposal for the town of Franklin to create a pilot program for alternative education within the school. She has cultivated interest and support amongst the faculty at the Kennedy school where her children attend. Lynn was also a member of last year's founding coalition. Terri Ross was a member of last year's founding coalition and continues her own work as a student of child development and a parent. Lynn Barry was also a member of last year's founding coalition.

We believe that each of the people involved in this project has a deep commitment to finding appropriate ways to nurture and teach children so that they contribute to the peaceful healing and growth of humanity and the planet. We are passionate about this work as evidenced by the number of volunteer hours that have been spent doing the work that we do and have a vision that is sustaining. Combine the passion of ideals with the real life experiences each of us brings to this work and we have the framework for our school. Each of us has a network to turn to as well, that can lead us to filling the details of the structure.

We are currently investigating the renewal of old relationships and the generation of new ones. Many of the ideas set forth here come from or are inspired by the Luvmours who co-authored the book, Natural Learning Rhythms. They are prepared to support this effort (through Ron Miller) and are available to give workshops to parents and staff. Mary Beth and Judy also have a relationship with Lynn Stoddard, a former elementary principal who restructured schools much along the lines of what is proposed here. His valuable work, as outlined in Redesigning Education:A Guide for Developing Human Greatness will be used to guide us and he also is available for professional development for parents and teachers. He has indicated that he would come in April for parent/teacher workshops.

Other partnerships with outside agencies include one with Professor Gawienowski at the University of Massachusetts as well as an affiliation with the Global Alliance for Transforming Education(GATE).

GATE plays an important role in revisioning education and keeping our perspectives focused and fluid. GATE supports the development of model schools that incorporate aspects of its mission which is "**To proclaim and promote a vision of education that fosters personal greatness, social justice, peace and a sustainable environment.**"

As in the last application, we see our goals as being in alignment with the 4-H of Massachusetts which is a cooperative extension service of the University of Massachusetts. We are in the process of exploring what the details of our relationship could be. The 4-H's vision is to be a world leader in developing youth to become productive citizens and catalysts for positive change to meet the needs of a diverse and changing society. The 4-H's Youth Development Education Program creates supportive environments for culturally diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential.

As a doctoral candidate in the School for Transformative Learning at the California Institute of Integral studies, Mary Beth developed a relationship with Peter Thurrell, also a past candidate and founder of the Ecological Literacy Project(ELP). The ELP has been invited by the National Science Foundation to apply for long term funding because it sees the potential of reaching schools through the Statewide Systemic Initiative with the goal of meaningful integrated science education.

C.Further recruitment of organizers of this school will be done to round out what we see as potential weaknesses. The main concern at this point is having someone who knows how to deal with all of the regulatory requirements of public schools, an administrator

5.School demographics

A.Describe the area where the school will be located.
We have decided to continue pursuing the idea of a school at the Ashland 4-H Center, however are pursuing possible sites in other towns.
Ashland is an economically developed suburb with a population of ca. 12,000. The diversity in the district is as follows(1990 data):3.5% Hispanic, 2.5% African American, 2.1% Asian American and 91.9% white. The total average per pupil expenditure was $4937 in 1993. Over the last 5 years there has been a significant growth (30%)in the student population in grades K-8. Performance on MEAP tests can be characterized as close to the state average, which is significantly less than 50% of students performing at grade level goals. We question the significance of these results and do not doubt the abilities of the children, but rather the authenticity of the tests and the curriculum. We intend to show that student learning can be dramatically improved given the appropriate curriculum and assessment .

B.Currently we have one real potential site in the metro-west area which is the 4-H site that we considered last year. Mary Beth has begun talking with the State Director of 4-H at U/Mass Amherst. This site was chosen for several reasons:

1.It is located in a rural area on 30 acres of natural beauty. It is ideal to promote the kinds of ecological/environmental learning that we are planning.

2.The 4-H is an organization dedicated to the growth of families and youth. They have a philosophy that is in alignment with ours.

3.The space itself would need very little to meet code and is practically turnkey. In fact, there are youth programs run there in the summer.

4..Ashland's proximity to Framingham also provides access to a rich diversity of students :14.2% Hispanic, 8.0% African American, 5.1% Asian American and 72.8% white in a population of 65,000

5..Framingham does have alternative pathways to fulfill individual educational needs at the high school level while Ashland does not.

We do not have any other site possibilities as concrete as the one in Ashland. We feel that this approach to education lends itself well to any community, rural or urban. If the site at Ashland does not work out we are very interested in working with a school district that might welcome this model. In fact, we believe that the most effective influence that we could have would be working within an existing school district free of the typical constraints. We feel that this would lend itself to building trust and confidence in what we are trying to accomplish and may enhance partnerships with other public schools for potential replication.

C. We would consider any school population that we serve to be unique--that is the hallmark of this school.

D. We project having a maximum of 150 students by the beginning of the 4th year. We would start with 50 students and add 25-50 the second year and 50-75 the 3rd year. After spending 2 years at an enrollment of 150 students, and if the charter is renewed we would consider the benefits of increasing our size or replicating ourselves, like a school within a school. Although there are economies of scale, current research indicates that smaller "community" schools are more appropriate. There would be the potential of dividing into a lower school (ca. ages 5-10) and an upper school (ca.ages 10-14/18). Thus the ultimate enrollment goal is uncertain and may be limited by the availability of a suitable building at the very least. Our goal would be to strive to make this available to as many students as possible without diminishing the quality of the program.

E. Initially we will enroll students between the ages of 5 and 10 in a non-graded multi-age grouping. We would be looking for a balanced distribution of ages the first two years and then preference to the 5,6, and 7 year olds so that they get full benefit of the program. Most of this thinking is predicated on an assumption of a five year charter with a five year renewal so that most of the children can experience their education within this model.

6.Recruiting and Marketing Plan

A.&B. Our emphasis is on having a diverse school community --it is fundamental to the philosophy of the school.

Last year's efforts to get people interested in charter schools, resulted in over 50 contacts being made, in which people came to working meetings. Most were not in the position to start a school but as noted previously these efforts served as the catalyst to other groups forming. We think that this demonstrates our ability to outreach to prospective families. In addition, through the many press releases released locally, a great deal of interest was spawned in the media which lead to more inquiries. Mary Beth still gets referrals from the Franklin Town Hall when anyone inquires there about charters or alternative education.

We are planning to host several public forums where people can hear about the philosophy of the school and ask questions. Dr. Ron Miller will be making presentations on the kind of educational practices that will be in place at this school and is scheduled to begin in March.We also have the opportunity in April to host Mr. Lynn Stoddard who restructured two elementary schools and whose model we are using. In July, we are planning to have Mr. Luvmour of Natural Learning Rhythms, whose work deeply informs ours give presentations/workshops to parents and teachers. These will be advertised by press releases and direct mail to those who know of our efforts already. Further we are currently working on a brochure that describes the school and has a section for obtaining more information. These brochures will be placed in all public libraries, pre-schools, YMCA's, town halls and community centers and churches. We also plan on announcing events using the local cable access TV. There are a diverse group of organizations in Framingham that can be contacted which represent a wide range of constituents. If our budget allows we will also put advertisements in the local newspapers and will certainly continue with press releases informing the public of the status of our work.

Additionally, we have obtained information from the Center for Law and Education in Boston that offers handbooks on educational services reaching homeless students, Hispanic and bi-lingual families and students and economically disadvantaged students. They also publish a number of helpful booklets in Spanish which we can use.

In the past, Dr. O'Brien has successfully interfaced with business schools that do research and has obtained the services of students to do marketing as a school project. We will also utilize this approach.

Further assistance is also available free of charge from the Small Business Development Center headquartered at UMass/Amherst. Mary Beth has utilized these services previously at the branch at Boston College.

C. Lack of parental advocacy is an issue if they do not trust the school to provide what the child needs. We are certainly willing to help any child go through the procedure and make the arrangements necessary to attend. By bringing this school to the attention of social service agencies we will also be able to reach potential students who are not living at home. Homeless students present a special case which we will contact the Center for Law and Education about. We feel that this student population would benefit enormously from the education and services we will offer.

7.Admissions policy

A. A written application and interview will be required. Demonstration on the part of the student, her/his family or the sending school district that his/her needs are not being met may be utilized. A committee of students, staff, parents and community will evaluate prospective students.The first year this will probably be members of the founding coalition and Board. It is imperative that there is a match between the mission and philosophy of this school and the unique educational and personal needs of the applicant and her/his family. (For instance, recognition that the school's mission is not only academic in nature and that certain activities undertaken at the school will not be regarded as educational from a traditional viewpoint.)In order for this to happen, the parent, in consultation with the student and the educational resources at the school must recognize the central role he or she has to take in order to have a successful outcome. There is overwhelming evidence that family involvement in the school life of a student is the most accurate predictor of achievement.(A New Generation of Evidence:The Family is Critical to Achievement, 1994 Henderson,A. and Berla, N.,ed., National Committee for Citizens in Education) Although this will vary in time from family to family and from period to period, it remains a commitment for the parent/guardian. It is recognized that many parents may not feel equipped to take on this responsibility and it is the intention of the school to provide the professional development and support to those who accept the challenge. We will not be setting admissions standards based on past performance or academic records, but rather on the expressed need, desire and commitment of the student and her/his family/advocate. There will be high expectations placed on students, especially to become increasingly responsible for their own learning and for families to be responsible to help build community.

The Circle Charter school will not discriminate for any reason and will comply with all relevant M.G.L and Federal Statutes. We will actively promote equity.

B.The process we will use to enroll students will be in compliance with M.G.L. c.71 s. 89.
An application stating name, address and phone# of student and parent(s) as well as statement of why student wants to attend this school will be required to initiate the admissions process. This is due

by April 10th (hereafter on or before January 30th of same year as the opening of school in September). Interviews will be conducted until April 14th(hereafter, until April 1st) and a lottery will be held, if necessary on the following day, of all suitable candidates. After the process for in-district candidates is completed and there are still places available, then the qualified candidates from out-of-district will be admitted either directly or through the lottery as space dictates. Cut-off date is attaining 5 years of age by March 1st before September entrance.
We believe that this process for the first year is somewhat problematical in terms of timing and may need an extension on the the deadlines.

C. Since this school is founded on respect for the individual, diversity in all of its forms (gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status,ethnicity and learning style) is embraced. This is not simply another school where you send your kids and hope for a better outcome. Here we work together to insure that outcome and thus, it is essential that in order to be accountable we must accept those who are willing to accept this responsibility. By striving to work with all who demonstrate this sincere desire we will not discriminate .

8.Timetable

We are basing the following on an opening date of September 1995.

	1995												'96
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F
Finalize Proposal	x	x												
Form Board of Trustees		x	x	x										
Board of Trustees Meets				x		x		x			x			x
Public Outreach	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Application cycle '95			x	x										
Application cycle '96											x	x	x	x
Recruit staff	x	x	x	x	x	x								
Working Meetings of staff					x	x	x	x	x	x				
Curriculum Development					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Finalize Building site			x	x										
Obtain necessary inspections				x	x									
Obtain insurance						x								
Interface with Ecological Literacy Project					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Develop partnership with 4-H	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Consult with Advisory Council	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Recruit partners	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Start Parent/Child Outreach and Development Ctr.									x	x	x	x	x	x
Outreach to area schools										x	x	x		x

9.Evidence of support

Since this application actually began last year we are including letters from the past. We have just renewed negotiations with the 4-H center in Ashland and find ourselves in a crunch for making all the outreach that we would like to do before this 2/15/95 deadline. As this application is being written we are simultaneously planning introductory talks for the Ashland and Framingham public. We anticipate this as an ongoing process.

Last year we began a telephone survey in Ashland. These are the questions we used.:

We are exploring the options of a new type of public school. We would like to gauge the interest of the community.

Do you think there is a need for a school where
... parents and teachers work equally and together to help students learn and grow?

...the development of the whole child is important and his or her unique learning style is respected?

... there are more opportunities for hands on learning?

15 responses total:
Q1) all yes Q.2). 12 yes, 3 no Q.3) 14 yes and 1 no

The following are samples of what some supporters have said:

....."Having worked with you on numerous projects over the past several years, I know your commitment to children, education and the community."
-- Jay Cohen MSW, LCSW, Human Services Coordinator

....."Our society needs to think anew,to take afresh approach to education. I believe the charter school will be a step in that direction." -- Jill Barnhardt, M.Ed. and public school teacher

....."The proposed charter school would offer...a choice to raise a more nurturing, whole and self-assured individual whose human potential will far surpass that of her peers [in the local school]"
-- local parents with daughter in primary grades

11 Lawndale Road
Mansfield, MA 02048
February 2, 1994

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to offer this letter in support of the Charter School Proposal being submitted by Mary E. Merritt.

There is a definite need for an alternate form of educating our young people. Parents need the opportunity to choose a developmentally appropriate, experiential curriculum for their children. The integration of democratic processes, problem-solving, and active learning can promote self-confidence, creativity, competence, and cooperation.

Ms. Merritt's philosophy of education incorporates the current needs of the child, and looks beyond to the future needs of the student. The holistic approach, integrating skills, concepts, and sense of self can only be beneficial to the individual and to society.

Our society needs to think anew, to take a fresh approach to education. I believe that the charter school will be a step in that direction. I urge you to give this proposal your full consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill A. Barnhardt, M.Ed.

Norfolk Children's School, Inc.
23 Union Street
Norfolk, MA 02056
Tel: 528-1970

Accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs

February 9, 1994

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the attached application for the establishment of a Charter School. As an early childhood educator, I recognize the importance the holistic and team approach to education plays in the development of human potential. Indeed, the National Association for the Education of Young Children has been a proponent of such principles for many years.

I believe this group of parents, educators, and community leaders, be allowed to continue their quest of a Charter School. I urge you to seriously consider this application, and establish a Charter School based upon the principles outlined in the application.

Sincerely,

Pamela B. Mele

Pamela B. Mele, MS Ed.
Director, Norfolk Children's School

Michele and Joseph Todesca
816 Summer Street
Franklin, Ma 02038

February 2, 1994

To The Secretary of Education,

There is a group of dedicated individuals in the Franklin area that have pooled their talents and ideals to develop a charter school proposal and initial plan.

The time has come for an alternative to the public school system as it is now and private/parochial schools.

For our family, we want a school in our general vicinity, that enhances and facilitates the development of the whole individual. Whose premise is the importance of each individual and his/her relationship in society, the world, the community. Where an individual's integrity and worth is valued.

We want to feel secure in the fact that our children will not be pigeonholed by labels. That their academic interests will have the opportunity to develop through alternative/creative means if warranted.

We firmly believe that a learning experience involving parents, teachers, administrators and students in a cooperative curriculum is fundamental to the development of the whole child.

It is so important, if we are to have a sound, successful, educational system, to have choices which best suit each individual student. We, therefore, highly support the proposal of a Charter School and this particular charter school in its mission and scope.

Michele A. Todesca
Joseph T. Todesca

THE FAMILY HOLISTIC CENTER
89 Main Street
Medway, Mass. 02053
533-4528

February 11, 1994

To Whom It May Concern:

Holistic Education promotes the balance of body, mind and spirit in each student, teacher, and provides for a balance in curriculum and relationships between the school and its community.

A charter school with holistic goals and orientation would be a great asset to the Greater Franklin community, provide prevention of dis-ease, strengthen existing networks and community, and enhance educational opportunities.

Sincerely,

Barbara Schneider (jw)

Barbara Schneider
MSW, ACSW, LICSW
Director
Family Holistic Center

BS/jw

09 February 1994

Regarding the proposed Charter School:

I support these beliefs in that they should be the basic goals for every educator. Children need to be nutured in an open, stimulating, non-threatening environment to reach their full potential. We want to encourage students to become risk takers in their own learning experience. The development of Metacognitive skills and self evaluation by students should be a focus.

Sincerely,

Linda Chelman

Linda Chelman,
2nd Grade, Kennedy School
LC/cc

Town of Franklin Human Services Department

FRANKLIN MUNICIPAL BUILDING
150 EMMONS STREET
FRANKLIN, MASSACHUSETTS 02038

Telephone (508) 520-4909
528-7900

Director of Human Services
MICHAEL D. JONES, M.C.P.

Human Services Coordinator
JAY S. COHEN, M.S.W., LCSW

Council on Aging
SENIOR CENTER
80 West Central Street
Meals Reservations
520-4945

Program Director
CAROL LARUE

SENIOR TRANSPORTATION
520-4909

February 9, 1994

Mary Beth Merritt
433 Maple Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Dear Ms. Merritt:

This letter is being written in support of your application to establish a Charter School to serve (in part) the Franklin community.

In my position as a social worker intervening with youths who are having personal problems, I see many such youths who are having a difficult time negotiating the public school system due to home, personal, social or other difficulties. While the Franklin School System provides an excellent education for most students, there are a number of students (and families) for whom an alternative educational approach would be of great benefit.

I believe strongly in the benefits of experiential learning for students, but also am very aware of the special support and educational conditions that often must accompany such a learning style. Without such personal and systemic support, many of the students that would benefit from this experience would be left out. I am currently involved with Dean College to expand their own program of experiential learning to make this important tool of personal, emotional and educational development available to an increased number of their students.

Having worked with you on numerous projects over the past several years, I know your commitment to children, education and the community. I look forward to the continued development of your Charter School application and to working closely with you once the project has been initiated.

Very truly yours,

Jay S. Cohen, MSW, LCSW
Human Services Coordinator

February 1, 1994

Dear Dr. Robertson,

I'm writing to you to show my support for the proposed publicly chartered school in the Franklin area. As a parent of a kindergartner I was faced with the awesome challenge of investigating potential schools for my child this year. My husband and I set out to explore our choices both in public and private institutions and came up feeling empty.

Our daughter is enrolled in the local public school and although we are thrilled with her teacher (a teacher whom we chose), we would have loved to have the opportunity to choose the way in which she was taught.

The proposed charter school would offer parents a choice not only in the type of education their child would receive, but a choice to raise a more nurturing, whole and self assured individual whose human potential will far surpass that of her peers.

In a world gone bad, this school proposes to create a challenging and nourishing education for our children that will not only benefit them, but also a community.

This school can only strengthen our communi

families and existing schools. We will be promotin strong human values through our children that will enable them to make responsible and productive choices throughout their lives. As a former educator, I'm excited about the possibility of my child receiving such a dynamic, hands-on approach to learning that for some reason is usually abandone after preschool.

Childrn and people learn through life experience. If we can foster the growth of the whole child with a drive for knowledge through a public school system, the results will be astonishing

Sincerly,
Lynn Barry
Gerald Barry

Lynn & Gerald Barry
7 Longboardi Dr.
Franklin, MA. 02038

10.Educational Program

A.The educational program chosen has many facets. It seeks to use the principles as defined by Gardner, the Luvmours, Stoddard, Markhova, Pearce, Steiner, Piaget and others to demonstrate, in accordance with the Principles of Learning, Teaching and Assessment, as outlined by the Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks,(in response to the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993) that:

1.All children can learn
2.Learners construct their own meanings
3.Learning is a life-long process that begins and continues in the home and extends to school and community settings.
4.Learners learn best in an environment which acknowledges, respects and accommodates each learner's background, learning style and gender.
5.Instruction should emphasize the quality of instruction rather than the quantity of information.
6.Students learn by engaging in authentic tasks of inquiry, reasoning, and problem solving that reflect real world practice.
7.Hands-on experiences deepen understanding of abstract concepts by encouraging the practice of process skills and communication and allowing for reflective thinking.
8.Learners need the social and organizational skills developed by working in groups. Learners benefit from social, organizational, self-evaluative and small group settings.
9.Assessment should be used as a tool to improve instruction and enhance student learning.
*(1-9) excerpted from Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
10.Each learner has unique learning patterns,rhythms and intelligences that need to be addressed in curriculum development.

Because each of us has unique neurobiological pathways that are engaged in the process of constructing meaning, and because each of has experienced life in different ways which is brought to bear on each learning experience, children don't all learn the same things; their opportunities can and will be equal but do not have to be, nor will they be the same. It is our belief that there is no real separation of "academic and "non-academic" pursuits because of the inherent connectedness of all things We will attempt to address the question

as separate issues but in practice all learning happens in a context and is not so easily subject to categorization or even quantification. How does one measure the quality of an experience?

It is our intention to use the Curriculum Frameworks currently under development as one of the guidelines for student's academic learning. One of our members, Mary Beth Merritt has spent the last 18 months helping to develop and redraft the Math and Science and Technology Frameworks as a parent volunteer. She is familiar with the intended use of the documents and has a relationship with the Statewide Curriculum Directors of Science and Mathematics, Mike Zapantis and Peg Bondorew. They are synopsized as follows (Education Today Vol. 10, No. 6, Mass. Dept. of Ed.) and will be available by the fall:

Mathematics: Core Concepts

Mathematics as problem solving
Mathematics as communication
Mathematics as reasoning
Mathematics as connections

Skills to be developed:

Number sense -numbers and number systems, computation and estimation
Patterns, relations and functions
Spatial sense and measurement
Statistics and probability
Integration of knowledge and application to problems

Science and Technology: Core Concepts

Inquiry encompasses the development of the necessary skills such as observing, hypothesizing,designing experiments, and interpreting evidence, within the context of solving problems.

Domains of Science encompass the presentation of the principles and laws of natural science and technology.

Technological Design focuses on how technology contributes to solving human problems or meets human needs.

Human Affairs focuses on the social consequences of science and technology

Skills to be developed:

Observing, hypothesizing, designing experiments, critical thought, interpretation, integration of knowledge and application to problem solving

English /Language Arts: Core Concepts

Lifelong learners use language to engage in constructing and conveying meaning by accessing, analyzing, evaluating and applying knowledge and experiences for a variety of purposes, audiences and situations.

Skills to be developed:

writing well constructed expository and creative pieces, self evaluative assessments for all learning

Social Studies: Core Concepts

Continuity and Change
People and Environments
Power and Participation
Production and Distribution
Culture and Identities
Interdependence

Skills to be developed:

Understanding democratic process through history, drama, literature and participation in school governance

Designing and researching a project that demonstrates the ability to understand another culture's point of view and how a thread of interconnectedness and interdependence runs through it.

The Arts: Core Concepts

Production and Performance
Imaginative, critical and reflective thought
Historical and cultural awareness

Skills to be developed:

Producing, perceiving, reflecting and evaluating (using model of Arts Propel developed by Howard Gardner, Educational Testing Service and Pittsburgh Public Schools)

World Languages: Core Concept

Communicating and Connecting

Skills to be developed:

The ability to converse in a second language
To have an empathic connection with another culture

eg., in Latin/Hispanic cultures, time is considered to have a cyclical nature, therefore there is plenty of it or there's always enough, whereas in the USA, time is generally regarded as being linear and we are always"running" out of time. When a Hispanic person says manana, they mean there's enough time to do what needs to be done and it doesn't mean that the person is lazy.

Health Core: Concepts

Resiliency
Health Literacy
Health Promotion and Advocacy

Skills to be developed:

Physical fitness, cooperative game playing, understanding of human development appropriate to age, decision making that is life affirming

Specifically, following an understanding of neurobiology and developmental milestones, introduction of skills and knowledge and values will occur according to a general schedule as follows. This is by no means exhaustive or comprehensive and serves as an example. In fact it may seem limiting and it is not entirely appropriate to break down the learning like this since learning occurs on a continuum. No person can be relegated to one type of intelligence or can be considered to be in all one phase of development or another. There is significant overlap to be expected and it is this idea of individual and unique development and intelligences that will ultimately inform our work.

Ages 5,6 and 7 : active play with code systems through imitation, rhythm and movement, starting with musical notations. Interactive language development through storytelling,invented spelling, drawing, movement and music. Teaching shapes or math through marching or dancing numbers or patterns, visceral phonics. This is accomplished in an atmosphere of security, warmth,nourishment and flexibility

Ages 6-8: Inner speech activities to guide thinking processes. Children need to be able to say out loud what they are thinking to facilitate this. Reading aloud. Code work in music notation, math and phonics. Categorizing, record keeping, fact collecting, data gathering. The above can be accomplished in many ways and is influenced by the interest and intelligence type of the children. All benefit from involving the body in the learning at this stage: cooking, building, balancing scale, gardening, cuisinaire rods, measuring growth of

living things, linking objects and names, finding order, playing rhythm instruments, manipulate objects, handwork, coordination games, modest public performance, cooperative games and imaginary play.
Ages 8-12:Vocabulary building, rules of grammar and punctuation, art and music activities that build skills while retaining creativity, foreign language vocabulary, reading and listening to books and stories, elementary geometry and algebra, writing and other expressive activities that reinforce personal expression and creativity through experiential learning, games with rules.

These are accomplished in an atmosphere that promotes feelings of fairness, justice, caring, concern, adaptability, adventure and honesty with good adult role models worthy of emulation.

Ages 10/12-15: At the ages of 10-12 there is significant brain growth, with girls exhibiting nearly twice that as boys. This is also just prior to the time when girls typically exhibit declines in self-esteem and in school performance. The appropriate environment is critical to development and requires sensitive respect of the individuals.
Activities that nurture social conscience, living skills and global awareness, freedom to express personal ideas and emotions, self-directed research projects,public speaking, more grammar, creative and academic writing, reading in all subjects, foreign language, debate, current affairs, civics, history, abstract math, surveying, engineering, chemistry, physics, geology, geography, beginning logic, practical calculation skills, nutrition, psychology and cultural anthropology.
This is a time, especially in the 12-15 year old range when ideals are especially important and they are developing a sense of "I". Meaningful work, pursuits and involvements, particularly ones that stimulate an awareness of freedom are essential. Students should be given support for intensive skill development depending upon preference and style, eg. public speaking for a verbal-linguistic person, genuine abstractions for a logical-mathematical person, dance and playing music for a musical person, exploration and strong challenges in nature both individually and in groups for bodily kinesthetic persons, astronomy and computer modeling for a spatially intelligent person, apprenticeships or projects that engage a cause for an interpersonal type person and psychology and philosophy for an intrapersonal type of intelligence.

CURRICULUM

- Each child is an individual - therefore, each child will progress according to his or her own blend of intelligences
- Meet the rhythms of each child - all have strengths and weaknesses
- Time in nature serves all learning modes

The Seven Types of Human Intelligence	Body-Being	Emotional-Being	Will-Being	Reasoning-Being
As derived from Gardener in *Frames of Mind*	Involve the body in the learning! Be flexible in attitude, expectations, and use of teaching tools; include tools/environments which allow safe testing of boundaries; Most Important: Textured exploration opportunities; No threats; minimum confinement; no need for formal education, especially before four.	As you model so you teach! Involve the child in the fairness of curriculum choices; Most Important: Opportunities to safely explore feelings of self and community. No hypocrisy.	Fire those ideals! Honor the search for individuation – Involve the child in creating her own destiny. Most Important: Challenging events that stimulate awareness of freedom. Never ridicule.	Recognize the Childs Maturity! Honor the ability to comprehend the fullness of space/time; Most Important: Opportunities to absorb data and guidance in organizing that data into systems. Eliminate condescension.
Verbal-Linguistic *Awareness of the sounds, rhythms, inflections, meaning, order, and functions of words*	Textured letters, *i.e.*, from dough, sandpaper, wood, *etc.*; singing together; opportunity to link objects and names; clear communication with elders; gentle humor; tongue twisters; looking at books; hearing stories; Montesson teaching tools	Reading and listening to books and stories, particularly inspirational ones; acting and all performing arts; opportunity to classify things; writing without excess constraint, *i.e.*, poetry; dialogue with friends and close elders; Eurhythmy; foreign language	Public speaking; grammar; creative and academic writing; reading in all subjects; foreign language; debate; world affairs; history; media	Etymology; advanced debate and public speaking; study of original sources in all disciplines; history of language; all social sciences; research papers; general semantics; influence of language on culture; inquiry
Logical – Mathematical *Creating and operating on strings of symbols that represent reality*	Cooking; building; balancing scale; gardening; beginning Cuisinaire rods; measuring growth of living things, *i.e.*, height of plant, weight gain of baby animals, own height and weight; manipulatives for shapes, *i.e.*, pattern blocks; Montesson teaching tools; games which use the childs body to make numbers, letters, *etc.*	Continuation and expansion of manipulatives, *i.e.*, Mortensen; continuation of home–based math in cooking, building; cooperative learning, *i.e.*, rhythm games; beginning abstractions; simple word problems; lots of music, *i.e.*, beginning relationship to scale, chords and notes, as well as sophisticated listening to compositions	Computer skills; genuine abstraction, *i.e.*, algebra and up; biographies of great mathematicians; hands – on surveying and engineering; beginning hard sciences; beginning logic; physiology; farming; practical calculation skills; nutrition	Higher math; formal logic; advanced science; the history of math and time; the philosophy (including ethics) of math and science; computer science; business and economics; farming
Musical *The controlled movement of sound in time*	Many opportunities to listen, touch, and dance; rhythm sticks; playful instruction, with contact with skilled musicians, especially the precocious	All the music the child's willing to engage; lessons where appropriate but minimum pressure to perform; dance; singing; music from all times and cultures; some reading notation	Individual's preference– support for intensive skill development; beginning musical theory; dance; opportunity to listen and play and participate in all types of music	Musical theory; the math of music; opportunity to specialize and practice intensively; public performance; cultural value of music; relationship of music to dance

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bodily Kinesthetic *Mastery over motion of the body and the ability to successfully manipulate objects*	Major component – Continuous support to explore handwork, dancing uninhibitedly, running, swimming, jumping, *etc.*; minimize instruction; rough and tumble; free time in nature, parks, and home; games which encourage full body participation; kites; much texture in the environment	Cooperative play; increased skill training, some team sports, but minimize winning and losing; rhythmic exercises, especially dance; team nature/wilderness exploration, *i.e.*, canoeing; drama; Eurhythmy; lots of free time	Strong challenges in nature, both individually and in cooperating groups; wilderness skills; ropes course; support for intensive skill development in area of preference, including crafts and fine handwork; disciplined movement, *i.e.*, ability to move silently, martial arts, miming, massage	Opportunity to specialize and practice intensively in both gross and fine motor activities; fasting; challenges that test limits and require strength and coordination; sitting still and silent; linking breath to movement and concentration, *i.e.*, modern dance, pranayama
Spatial *The capacity to accurately perceive, transform, modify, and recreate aspects of the visual world*	Lots of colors, *i.e.*, in room, outdoors, paints, learning tools, games which place shapes into holes; lots of movement; activities in wide open spaces and in close spaces; climbing; coordination games, clay sculpting; rough and tumble; gentle verbal reminders of physical boundaries	Painting, drawing, building, sewing, opportunity to explore rhythms of seasons, plant and animal life from cell to whale; beginning astronomy; model-making; journeys to skyscrapers, caves and the ocean; varied movement modes, *i.e.*, horseback, bicycle, motorboat, roller skates; advanced Cuisinaire rods; sophisticated use of patterns and shapes and blocks	Major Component Exotic experience, *i.e.*, spelunking, using high-powered telescopes, space camp; computer modeling; travel, especially in varied landscapes; hands-on creations, *i.e.*, carpentry, mechanics, pottery; drawing to scale; navigation; control over personal territory; introduction to computer geometry	Emphasize correlations, *i.e.*, the music of architecture, the science of painting, the dance of logic, chaos theory as poetry; travel; extended journeys to exotic events, *i.e.*, the Taj Mahal, Himalayas, Amazon, pyramids, Empire State Building, Tokyo sewer system; detailed scale drawing and model making; electron microscope to huge telescope; archaeology to futuristic simulations; landscaping
Interpersonal *The ability to notice and make distinctions among others, and oneself in relationship to others*	Opportunities to express oneself in modest public performances and daily life; cooperative games with peers which emphasize the body; interest in the childs interests, including conversation; no put-downs; no excessive praise; minimize social expectations	Major Component Acting and all performing arts; safe space to explore feelings with friends and close elders; cooperative activities which emphasize values; chance to exercise justice, *i.e.*, deciding chore responsibility for all family members, full participation in class government; ecology; helping the less fortunate; conversations about death	Forums for expressions of Ideals, *i.e.*, U.N. Simulation, activist marches; apprenticeships; peer contact; supervised challenging group activities with processing, travel, especially to non-industrialized countries; projects that engage a cause; mutual setting of boundaries with family; caring for toddlers, the less fortunate and animals	Simulation of all types of government; travel; intimacy; exchange student; special interest activism; interaction with peers and people of varied cultures; inquiry
Intrapersonal *The ability to know oneself*	Enter child's imaginary world through playing together while following the childs lead, *i.e.*, being bears in the woods, then comment, Boy, we're really cuddly today, huh?; humor, chance to touch both live and dead creatures; acknowledgment of feelings, some control over own life, *i.e.*, letting child direct play for half-hour	Acting, myth, support to understand personal feelings through inquiry and humor; time with trusted teenager; honoring the mystery Window by simulating inspiration; conversations about death; non-lecturing exploration of elders feelings; inspirational environments, *i.e.*, cathedrals, mountain tops	Psychology; apprenticeships; introduction to philosophy and religion; Vision Quest; cultural and physical anthropology	Major Component Philosophy, contemplation; meditation; prayer; Vision Quest; all branches of psychology; inquiry

**Major Component means that the Stage-Specific Wisdom thrives on that particular intelligence. If that intelligence is not educated well, all other learning is adversely affected and can occur in only an incomplete way.*

B.Teaching Methods and Enhancement of Student Learning

"Instruction begins when you, the teacher, learn from the learner." --Kierkegaard

"If he is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind."
--Kahil Gibran

We call for a new understanding of the role of the teacher. We believe that teaching is essentially a vocation or calling, requiring a blend of artistic sensitivity and scientifically grounded practice. Many of today's educators have become caught in the trappings of competitive professionalism: tightly controlled credentials and certification, jargon and special techniques, and a professional aloofness from the spiritual, moral and emotional issues inevitably involved in the process of human growth. We hold, rather, that educators ought to be facilitators of learning, which is an organic, natural process and not a product that can be turned out on demand. Teachers require the autonomy to design and implement learning environments that are appropriate to the needs of their particular students.

We call for new models of teacher education which include the cultivation of the educator's own inner growth and creative awakening. When educators are open to their own inner being, they invite a co-learning, co-creating process with the learner. What teaching requires is an exquisite sensitivity to the challenges to human development, not a pre packaged kit of methods and materials. We call for learner centered educators who display a reverence and a respect for the individual. Educators should be aware of and attentive to each learner's needs, differences, and abilities and be able to respond to those needs on all levels. Educators must always consider each individual in the contexts of family, school, society, the global community, and the cosmos.

--Excerpted from the Vision Statement of *Education 2000 A Holistic Perspective* as put forward by the Global Alliance for Transforming Education.

Our teaching methods are multi - pronged in order to be effective in addressing each student's learning style and to develop feelings of strong self-worth which further enhances learning and is fundamental to the way we interact with each other. We adhere to principles as outlined by GATE , above and practices as listed below

and have sought to combine the most current ideas in teaching and learning which are also undergirded by research results.

1.In the widest sense possible, teaching will be developmentally appropriate, which is to say child-centered, experiential and consistent with democratic values (see Reaching Potentials: Curriculum and Assessment for Young Children 1992, Bredekamp,S. and T. Rosegrant, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

2.The most effective and meaningful learning occurs when it builds on a students strengths, interests and unique gifts and experiences. The focus on a child's strengths and knowledge rather than her deficits helps the brain construct circuitry so that new knowledge and skills can be learned. Methods as outlined by Lynn Stoddard author of Redesigning Education, A Guide for Developing Human Greatness Zephyr Press,1992 and Josette and Sambhava Luvmour authors of Natural Learning Rhythms will be used as guidelines for teacher practices. Goals for individual growth and learning will be developed by a team consisting of the parent, student and teacher using questionnaires as follows (or modified).

Parent Priorities

for the education of _____

for the _____ school year

(Complete left column first) Priority 1, 2, 3, etc. (most important to least important)	Responsibility, Where? (check appropriate column) All home	Mostly home, partly school	Mostly school, partly home	All school	Best done by school & home, working together
___ **The Student Values Learning** Is curious, accepts challenges, becomes absorbed, enjoys learning.					
___ **The Student Values Work** Takes initiative, is self-motivated, follows directions, plans and organizes, assumes responsibility, follows through, evaluates work.					
___ **Self-Esteem** Is aware of strengths and weaknesses, feels valuable and unique, feels comfortable when alone as well as in a group, trusts with discretion.					
___ **Respects Environment** Respects and maintains personal and public property, enjoys and protects nature.					
___ **Respects Others** Respects the rights, feelings, attitudes, cultures, and occupations of others; works cooperatively and enjoys other people.					
___ **Reading** Enjoys reading, is acquiring new skills.					
___ **Written Communication** Is acquiring new writing and spelling skills, enjoys creative writing.					
___ **Oral Communication** Listens and understands, can follow directions, enjoys and participates in group discussions.					
___ **Mathematics** Enjoys mathematics; is acquiring new skills and concepts and is able to apply them.					
___ **Physical Health and Development** Eats, sleeps, and dresses properly, practices personal hygiene, is developing new physical skills and strength.					
___ **Appreciation of the Arts** Enjoys literature, music, visual and performing art.					
___ **Student Individuality** The student is developing individual talents, interests, skills, and abilities.					
___ **Responsible Citizenship** The student is developing appreciation for and understanding of the workings of a democracy.					
___ **Other (describe):** _____ _____ _____ _____					

Priorities

for the education of _____
student

for the _____ school year

Please rate the following educational goals 1 through 10, according to your child's needs, in terms of what you feel is most to least important for the school to help you accomplish:

__ **Health and Physical Development**
Nutrition habits; physical fitness; strength, endurance, agility, and skill in sports, games, and life activities.

__ **Human Relations and Communication**
Getting along with others, leadership, cooperation, courtesy, respect, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

__ **Identity and Individuality**
Self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline, responsibility, moral character, and the development of individual talents, gifts, interests, and abilities.

__ **Inquiry, Thinking, Learning**
Curiosity, eagerness to learn, study skills and habits, problem solving, creativity, and decision making.

__ **Science and Math**
Knowledge and skill in mathematics and the physical sciences.

__ **Arts**
Knowledge, skill, and appreciation for literature, music, dance, and the visual and performing arts.

__ **Work**
Initiative, self-motivation, self-direction, persistence, following through, and evaluating work; understanding of attitudes, knowledge, and abilities needed for various vocations.

__ **Responsible Citizenship**
Respect for and understanding of the workings of a democracy, appreciation for political processes and free enterprise.

__ **Environment**
Respect and maintenance of personal and public property, enjoying and protecting nature.

__ **Other** (describe): _____

_____

Individual Identity Profile

For _____
Name Grade Date Submitted by

Please rate your child's strengths in the following areas using the 0-5 scale provided, with 5 as the highest rating.

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Linguistic Intelligence						
Verbose — enjoys talking and playing with words						
Enjoys writing, is fluent and expressive						
Reads a lot for pleasure and information						
Musical Intelligence						
Sings, hums, whistles a lot (on key)						
Enjoys listening to a variety of music, notices various sounds						
"Plays" instruments, makes sounds, feels rhythms						
Logical-Mathematical Intelligence						
Curious, asks many questions						
Collects, counts, compares, sorts, categorizes, and studies things						
Plays with numbers, enjoys arithmetic "problems"						
Spatial Intelligence						
Remembers landmarks, places visited						
Knows directions, can draw and follow maps						
Enjoys and is good at drawing, painting, sculpting						
Is clean, neat, orderly						
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence						
Graceful, agile use of body						
Expressive with dance, gymnastics, gestures, mime, athletics						
Handles objects skillfully, can fix things						
Personal Intelligence						
Understands and likes self, controls emotions						
Self-confident, plans, organizes, uses initiative, persistence, work						
Honesty and integrity, zest for life, thankful, appreciative						
Social Intelligence						
Kind, friendly, loving, caring, generous, courteous						
Leadership/followership						
Listens attentively, demonstrates empathy/respect						
Is sensitive to others' feelings						
General Intelligence						
Creative, inventive, imaginative						
Sense of humor						
Money management/thrift						
Hobby or expertise in a particular field of knowledge						

Attributes	Being	Transmitting Mode	Age	Attitude Key Foods	Characteristics
Womb – Environment provides the foundation for future growth					
Birth – Unbridled love					
Receptivity Life-affirming or *"I'm Alive"*	**Body-Being**	Sensation	0-7	*Key Attitude* Loving touch *Key Foods* Security, warmth, nourishment, flexibility.	The child learns a working knowledge of personal and planetary bodies. Secures the body on the planet. Provides for future growth. Absorbs by sensation-impressions and observation-imitation. What you see is what there is. **The Child Is** – I am the center of the world, the world is an extension of my body. I am alive.
Vulnerability *"I and Others"*	**Emotional-Being**	Feeling	8-12	*Key Attitude* Right modeling *Key Foods* Fairness, justice, caring, concern, adaptability, adventuresomeness, honesty	The child learns a deciphering of personal and social feelings. Needs the example of someone and is very susceptible to inspiration. Provides a foundation for future growth. Absorbs by feeling Impressions and observation. **The Child Is** – aware of personal death for the first time in her life. I care about the feelings of others and what they feel about me.
Assertion *"I Alone"*	**Will-Being**	Probing	12-15	*Key Attitude* Sensitive respect *Key Foods* Challenges, adventure, active activities, peer-sensitive, beginning of responsibility, protector of personal space, opportunity to express and work with ideals.	The child solidifies previous experience and defines a "self" to deal with puberty changes. Will provides a definite basis for Reasoning-Being comparisons by attempting to define an "I." The child appears to be very confident in her convictions. The child operates on ideals. **The Child Is** – absorbed with her own individuality. But Will ends in confusion as the assertions prove inadequate.
Questioning *"Who Am I"*	**Reasoning-Being**	Thinking	16-21	*Key Attitude* Mature recognition *Key Foods* Comparison, exploration, experimentation, recapitulation, suggestion, investigation, discernment.	The child evaluates past and future. She is able to tap Body-Being wisdom, Emotional-Being wisdom and Will-wisdom. She is also able to now research alternatives for herself. **The Child** – recognizes that there is such a thing as Intuition.
Recognition *"I Am"*	**Intuition**	Synchronization	21 & Up	*Key Attitude* Openness.	Access to ever-more refined "Love." Access to non-thought intelligence. Realization of personal history. Always more indefinable, simultaneous, and spontaneously non-habitual. **The Individual Is** – open and non-prejudicial.

4.The theory of Multiple Intelligences as developed by Gardner and Walters as well as the Thinking and patterns as outlined by Markova and Powell in How Your Child is Smart will be utilized to help students identify their learning and expressing strengths. A student profile will be developed with the student, parent and teacher and which will be reevaluated on an on-going basis to ascertain it's usefulness. It is not to be construed as the only true picture of a child, but simply a tool to be used to foster appropriate practice. See sample instrument following.

4.At each stage of brain growth, new neural materials appear for the new constructions of knowledge that open at these times. The overall progression is from the concrete to the abstract. Further, no higher stages of development can unfold fully until the lower stages are at least functionally operational. We will seek to follow the natural learning rhythms present in each child to guide teaching. We can see from the diagram attached, that there are periods of active growth (intense learning stages) and plateaus, where reinforcement occurs. Attention and appropriate response will be given to these stages.

5.We will encourage and empower students to take increasing responsibility for their learning.

THINKING PATTERNS INVENTORY

Directions: For each question, choose the answer that's most true and make a check mark in the appropriate column on page 61. If more than one option is given, choose both. For example, if the answer to question 1 is "a," make a checkmark in both the AKV and AVK columns. After you've answered all the questions, count up how many check marks you have in each column. The one with the most is probably your child's pattern. To help confirm this, read the charts that begin on page 63.

From what you can readily observe:

1. How would you describe how your child talks?

a. Words pour out, in logical order, all the time, without hesitation; has an excellent vocabulary — AKV, AVK

b. May be self-conscious or shy about speaking in groups — VKA, KVA

c. Uses many metaphors and images ("It's like a cyclone, a blue funnel, a whirling top") — VAK, KAV

d. Talks mostly about actions, feelings, what's happening — KAV

e. Makes hand motions before words, must use hands or movement to find words — VKA, KAV

f. Talks in circles, asks endless questions — VKA, KVA

How Your Child is Smart/A life-changing approach to learning
by Dawna Markova,PH.D. and Anne Powell
Published by Conari Press, 1144 65th Street, Suite B
Emeryville, CA 94608

How would you describe your child's eye contact?

a. Maintains steady, persistent eye contact — VAK, VKA
b. "Eye shy," uncomfortable with eye contact for more than a few seconds, looks away frequently — AKV, KAV
c. Keeps steady contact, but blinks or twitches if sustained — AVK, KVA
d. Eyes glaze over if listening too long — VKA, KVA

. **How would you describe your child's handwriting?**

a. Neat and legible — VAK, VKA
b. Difficult to read — AVK, KVA
c. Immature, sometimes messy, may have difficulty forming letters — AKV, KAV

. **What does your child remember most easily?**

a. What's been said, jokes, lyrics, names of people, titles; memorizes by saying something repeatedly — AKV, AVK
b. What's been seen or read, people's faces, how something looks; memorizes by writing something repeatedly — VAK, VKA
c. What's been done or experienced, the feel or smell of something; memorizes by doing something repeatedly — KVA, KAV

. **How would you describe your child's physical needs and kills?**

a. Is constantly in motion, wiggly, needs freedom to move — KVA, KAV
b. Can sit still easily for long periods — AVK, VAK
c. Can feel awkward or get easily frustrated when first learning physical activity — AVK, VAK

d. Learns physical skills easily — KVA, KAV

6. How does your child respond to touch?

a. Tends to be shy about physical contact — AVK, VAK
b. Likes to touch and be touched frequently — KVA, KAV
c. Touches after initial contact — AKV, VKA

7. How does your child express his or her feelings?

a. Very private about feelings — VAK
b. Feelings seem right beneath the surface — AKV, VKA
c. Expresses feelings easily — AKV, KAV
d. Expresses reasons for feelings easily — AVK
e. Almost impossible to put feelings into words — KVA

8. Under what conditions does your child "space out?"

a. With too much visual detail, being shown something, or questions about what they see — AKV, KAV
b. With too many words, verbal explanations, or questions about what they have heard — VKA, KVA
c. With too many choices of what to do, being touched, or questions about how they feel — AVK, VAK

9. What is your child's most frustrating behavior?

a. Can't sit still or stay put — AKV, KAV
b. Communicates first physically, with slap or push — KAV
c. "Shows off" — VAK
d. Wisecracks, is "fresh" verbally — AKV, AVK
e. Gets sullen or withdraws — VKA, KVA
f. Interrupts, talks incessantly — AKV, AVK
g. Whines, complains, "yeah-but's" — VKA

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For more information, ask your child the following:

10. What do you remember most easily after seeing a movie, a TV program, or reading:

a. What the people and the scenes looked like — VAK, VKA
b. What was said or how the music sounded — AKV, AVK
c. What happened or how the characters felt — KVA, KAV

11. What's the first thing you do to remember someone's phone number?

a. Say it to myself or hear it in my head — AKV, AVK
b. See the phone or the numbers in my head — VAK, VKA
c. Feel myself picking up the phone and dialing — KVA, KAV

12. What's the thing you remember most easily about people you just met?

a. What you did with them or how they felt — KVA, KAV
b. How they looked — VAK, VKA
c. Their name or what they said — AKV, AVK

13. What's the scariest, hardest for you to take?

a. Mean, hurtful words — VKA, KVA
b. Poking, invasive touch — AVK, VAK
c. Nasty looks — AKV, KAV

14. How do you put something together?

a. I read the directions and then do it. Telling me confuses me. — VKA
b. I read the directions, ask questions, then talk to myself as I do it. — VAK
c. I work with the pieces, then ask questions if I need to. I never read directions. — KAV
d. I work with the pieces, look at the diagram, then ask questions. — KV[illegible]
e. I have someone tell me, then show me how, then I try it. — AV[illegible]
f. I have someone tell me how to do it, then I try it. I only read directions as a last resort. — AK[illegible]

15. What's most important when you decide which clothes wear?

a. How they feel, how comfortable they are, the texture — KVA, KA[illegible]
b. The colors, how they look on me, how they go together — VAK, VK[illegible]
c. An idea of what's me, the brand name, what the clothes say about me — AKV, AV[illegible]

	AKV	AVK	KAV	KVA	VKA	VAK
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						

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	AKV	AVK
Language Characteristics	Interacts with others easily by talking. Has extensive vocabulary. Speaks with lots of feeling and rhythm. Likes to tell others what to do (natural leaders).	Interacts with others easily by talking. Has extensive vocabulary. Speaks logically about facts, ideas, concepts. Likes talking with adults and older children.
Visual Characteristics	Is "eye-shy"—cannot maintain eye contact. Sees whole picture. Makes simple drawings. Has messy handwriting with unique style.	Makes steady eye contact—may blink, flutter, twitch. Can pay attention to "big picture" and details at same time. Can turn images around in his/her mind. Has hard-to-read handwriting.
Physical Characteristics	Has pent-up energy right below the surface. Enjoys sports—good coaches, athletes. May be tentative about touch at first.	May have sketchy sense of his/her body. May be awkward, easily frustrated by physical activities. Prefers free-form activities (running, swimming) to competitive sports. Is shy about touch, private about feelings.
Learning Strengths and Challenges	Learns easily through discussion and lecture. Learns well with hands-on approach. Can have difficulty with reading, writing, spelling. Can learn to speak languages by ear.	Learns easily through discussion and lecture. Learns well through reading. Has difficulty with hands-on learning activities, sports. Can learn languages easily by ear and by reading.
"Spaces Out"	With too many things to look at, questions about what s/he sees.	With touch, questions about how how s/he feels.
Typical Trouble	Interrupts others. Can be "wisecracker"—sarcastic, fresh, kids around too much, hurts others with his/her words.	Interrupts others. Monopolizes conversations. Asks many "Why?" questions.
Frustrations	Has difficulty feeling satisfied when trying to make visions into reality.	Has difficulty putting feelings into words. Has difficulty learning physical skill without words or visuals to follow.
Natural Gifts	Is visionary thinker—has many great ideas. Wants to inspire others.	Is great communicator—loves to exchange ideas. Wants to help.

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	KVA	KAV
Language Characteristics	Is usually soft-spoken. Speaks concisely. Speaks rarely in groups. May take a long time to find words, with big pauses between them. Needs silence to find words.	Enjoys talking about personal experiences. Is good at teaching activities, explaining movement. Likes to tell stories. Uses hand motions to help find his/her words.
Visual Characteristics	Makes steady eye contact—may blink, flutter, twitch. Can pay attention to "big picture" and visual details at same time. Can turn images around in his/her mind and see them from many angles. Can have hard-to-read handwriting.	Is "eye-shy"—cannot maintain eye contact. Can take in the "whole" of something with a glance. Organizes by making piles. Is rarely aware of visual images. May have messy handwriting with unique style.
Physical Characteristics	Interacts most easily with others by doing something together or making physical contact. Loves to be active, likes to move, do. Has smooth, graceful energy. Is usually well-coordinated, natural athlete. Likes competitive sports. Likes to touch and be touched. Learns physical skills easily.	Interacts most easily with others by doing something together or making physical contact. Is constantly moving, doing. Has huge amounts of physical energy. Is usually well-coordinated, natural athlete. Likes competitive sports. Likes to touch and be touched.
Learning Strengths and Challenges	Learns easily with hands-on or experiential approaches. Can be good reader, if taught through experience, not phonics. Has difficulty with oral reading and reports. Has difficulty concentrating in lecture classes or participating in discussions.	Learns physical skills easily. Learns easily with hands-on or experiential approaches. Can learn well from discussions about relevant subjects. Can have difficulty with reading, writing, spelling.
"Spaces Out"	With long verbal explanations, questions about what s/he thinks or what s/he's heard.	With many things to look at, or questions about what s/he sees.
Typical Trouble	Can get sullen and withdrawn.	Can get "hyperactive," has difficulty sitting still, fidgets.
Frustrations	Has great difficulty expressing feelings in words.	Has difficulty finding positive outlets for physical energy.
Natural Gifts	Is great lover of nature, especially animals. Has many dissimilar interests (eg., drawing and ice hockey). Wants to unite dissimilar elements.	Is great "doer"—loves to take action, get things done. Wants what s/he does to be useful to others.

	VAK	VKA
Language Characteristics	Speaks with feeling and emphasis. Loves to tell stories, explain, persuade others. Talks out loud to sort ideas and make decisions. Uses fillers like "um," "like," or "you know." Likes to convince people with words.	Speaks from personal experi ence in circling way. Must use hands or move to speak. May take a long time to find words with long pauses between them. Speaks rarely in groups
Visual Characteristics	Connects with others most easily with eye contact. Shows what s/he feels on his/her face. Keeps organized with lists, notes. Likes visual order. Has neat, legible handwriting.	Connects with others mos easily with eye contact. Feel: what s/he sees. Keeps organ ized with lists, notes. Need: visual order to think clearly. Has neat, legible handwriting
Physical Characteristics	Can sit still for long periods. May be awkward, easily frustrated by physical activities. Has sketchy sense of his/her body; needs to close eyes to feel sensation. Is shy about touch, private about feelings. Prefers free-form activities (running, swimming) to competitive sports.	Has pent-up energy right be low the surface. Learns sport: easily, good athlete. Can tel what s/he feels in body quit easily with eyes open. May b tentative about touch. Like organized, competitiv sports May confuse others feelings and sensations wit his/her own.
Learning Strengths and Challenges	Is avid reader—learns to read easily. Learns well by reading and talking about, or teaching others. Writes, spells, proofreads well. Has difficulty with hands-on learning activities, structured physical skill lessons.	Can be good reader, if taugh words by sight rather tha phonics. Learns easily b watching and then doing without words and takin notes. Writes, spells, proof reads well. Has difficulty wit oral reading and reports, con centrating in lectures or par ticipating in discussio classes.
"Spaces Out"	With touch, questions about what s/he wants to do or how s/he feels.	With long verbal explana tions, questions about wha s/he thinks or what s/he' heard.
Typical Trouble	Shows off. Can be overly helpful to make good impression.	Can be whiner and com plainer. Can go along with th crowd too much.
Frustrations	Has difficulty making time estimates.	Has difficulty thinking for sel
Natural Gifts	Is great teacher—loves to show and tell. Wants to illuminate.	Is great partner, works wel with others. Wants to creat networks between people make connections.

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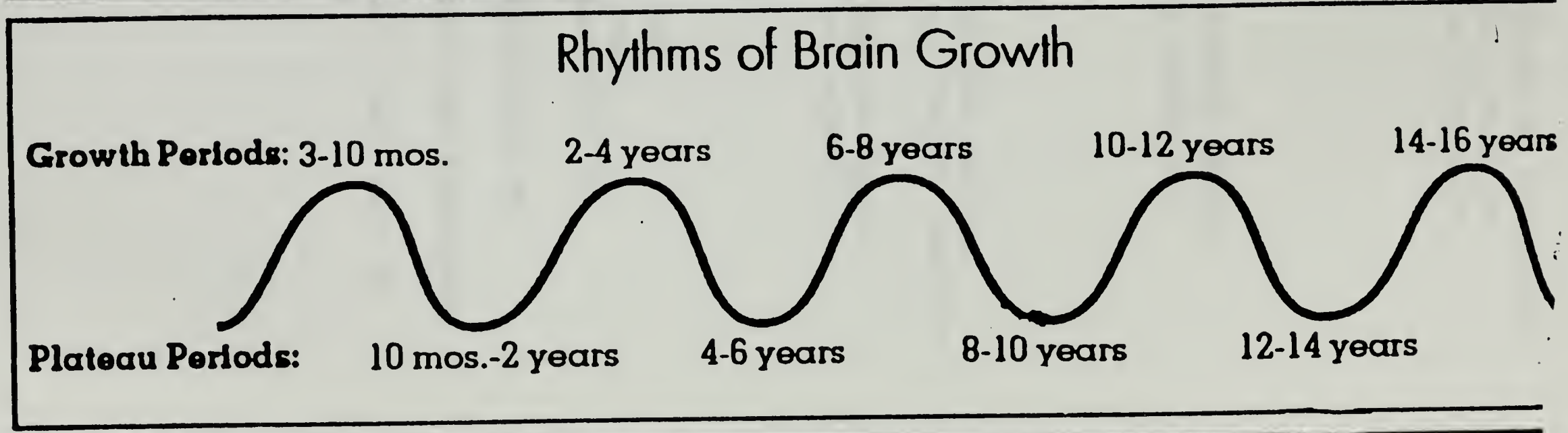
The Rhythmic Brain

In the past, human cognitive development has been perceived as emerging along an ever-increasing continuum of complexity. Jean Piaget, a Swiss zoologist and child psychologist, carefully observed and recorded children's behavior and the development of logical thought processes. From this, he recognized that the development of thought occurs in a series of stair-step stages, increasing in complexity from stage to stage, each stage built upon the previous one. We can compare these stages to neurologic growth patterns and see a correlation that provides a basis for a pattern of alternating brain growth and rest cycles rather than a straight-line continuum of development.



Periods of neurologic brain growth occur during intensive spurts

6. *We will use the context of the natural world and the fundamental human endeavors therein to provide a context from which an emergent curriculum is developed. Out of this we help create:

a school which has:

- a composting and recycling program
- Indoor and outdoor organic gardens
- ecological restoration projects
- nature trails
- parents and community involved in the learning process
- student directed auditing of materials and energy use

teachers who are

- generating team building processes
- using integrated learning themes, materials and activities
- creating a classroom culture that encourages inquiry, hands-on discovery and cooperation
- engaging childrens' (and their own) multiple intelligences
- finding appropriate uses for computers and technology
- evaluating authentically

students who have

- a deep and abiding love of the natural world
- an age-appropriate sense of self in the world
- confidence in their ability to question, investigate and discover their world and themselves
- an understanding of the complex interrelationships and processes in local natural systems
- practical skills for thinking, problem solving and cooperative effort
- a commitment to helping make their place a better place for all

*--from The Ecological Literacy Project

As an example, Mary Beth loves to garden organically and grows food for her family which is used throughout the year through storage and preservation. Part of what we do as a family is to recycle food scraps in a composting pile which we then use as soil for the garden in the spring. A parent with an interest such as this could volunteer to help start a garden, composting and recycling program that students of all ages could be involved in. The opportunities for learning are enormous and if planned with the teachers and students could inform the whole curriculum.

For instance, gardening requires careful planning and calculating. How many plants of tomato and other fruits and vegetables do we need to feed the school for a year's worth of. weekly community meals? How many preserving jars are required? What is the best way to improve yields? Do we rotate crops , do companion planting? What was the Native American wisdom on this in this area? How do other cultures farm and sustain themselves? How does this effect the health of the soil? What are soil characteristics that promote growth? How do we measure these? What is composting and how does it work? Why should we recycle, who cares? What are the functions of all the bugs and worms in the soil? What about how this effects the rest of the eco-system? What other variables are important to consider? Do we have to monitor the weather? What is the nutritional value of the crops we want to plant? How are they prepared so that they are appealing to most of the group? Can we experiment to find out the answers to these and other questions? Is there information in books, what about the cooperative extension service or the horticultural society and supply houses?

These are only a few of the considerations we could address as a learning collaborative. The garden can be the vehicle for developing academic skills in reading, writing, math, science,and social studies Further this work engages the students with all their senses and can be geared to their level and phase of development as well as individual interests. Everyone can start to develop an understanding about how their actions and attitudes affect the world around them. They can also develop habits that will serve them now and later, such as hard work, commitment, and responsibility. What happens to the garden when no one remembers to water it? What happens when you plant a crop that is not appropriate to the climate and it fails? Are there parallels in history?

11. Student Performance

We call for a thorough rethinking of grading, assessment and standardized examinations. We believe that the primary function of evaluation is to provide feedback to the student,teacher and parent in order to facilitate the learning process. We suggest that "objective scores" do not truly serve the learning or optimal development of students. We have been so busy measuring the measurables that we have neglected those aspects of human development which are immeasurably more important. Besides neglecting important dimensions of all learners, standardized tests also serve to eliminate those who cannot be standardized. In successful innovative schools around the world , grades and standardized tests have been replaced by personalized assessments which enable students to become inner directed. The natural result of this practice is the development of self-knowledge, self–discipline and genuine enthusiasm for learning. --from the Vision Statement of Education 2000 A Holistic Perspective as put forward by GATE

As charter school applicants we recognize the need to operate within the parameters expected of us and that there is a need to be accountable to the public which funds the school. We will strive to meet the public's need while balancing that with what we feel is authentic assessment. We feel that it is quite impossible to know the moral character of a student with a 4.0 GPA versus a 1.9 GPA and for all the facts a student may have stored in his/her head , it may be put to poor use. Our assessments will strive to ascertain the development of the whole child and will seek to use this information in a growth promoting way.

We will also comply with state testing requirements.

A.Our plan to assess student's learning is as follows:

1.Parent - student - teacher conferences at least 2x/year

2.Process-folios, an ongoing profile of student learning that demonstrates progression towards goals. This may be in many forms as appropriate to the student's style of learning and expressing

3.Portfolios - sampling by teacher and student of student's best work.

4.Self-assessment through journal keeping

See instruments following.

An Assessment of Student Growth in the Three Dimensions of Human Greatness

Date _____ Evaluation for _____

Please indicate how much you feel this child is growing in each of the categories listed below:

	Comments:
Identity	
1. Self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence	
2. Sense of responsibility for his/her own learning and behavior	
3. Awareness and development of his/her unique strengths, talents, gifts, interests, and abilities	
Interaction	
4. Kindness, trust, thoughtfulness, tolerance, and respect for others	
5. Social attitudes and skills — the ability to listen with understanding, express ideas, and get along with others	
6. Enjoyment and ability to express him/herself in writing	
7. Responsible citizenship, understanding of the workings of the democratic process, respect for environment and laws	
Inquiry	
8. Enjoyment of learning	
9. Enjoyment of school	
10. Curiosity, initiative, self-direction, and independence in trying to learn	
11. Studying and seeking information from a variety of sources	
12. Ability and desire to read for recreation and personal growth	
13. Ability and desire to use knowledge to create, invent, think, and solve problems	

_____
Signature of evaluator

Directions:

The parent or teacher is to read each question orally to the student, who then draws a smiling face, a frowning face, or an "in-between face" to represent his/her feelings about the question.

Identity:

		Example Answers
1.	Do you do a good job of learning?	
2.	Are you good at some things?	
3.	Does your teacher like you?	
4.	Do your classmates like you?	

Inquiry:

1.	Do you learn about the things you want to learn about in school?	
2.	Do you ask a lot of questions in your class?	
3.	Do you read outside of school?	
4.	Do you like to figure things out by yourself?	

Interaction:

1.	Do you get along with other students?	
2.	How do you behave in school?	
3.	Do other people listen to your ideas?	
4.	Do you get along with your family?	
5.	Do you like to write?	

Name

B. Student's who are not meeting their learning goals will have a conference with the teacher and parents /guardians to determine the cause of the difficulty. We will rely heavily on the parents/advocate to help address the student's needs and will support their efforts as needed. Peer support is also appropriate. We believe that learning disability labels are often more correctly identified as a teaching disability - when one is attuned to the student's learning style many so-called problems vanish. Assigning these labels does not describe a learner's potential, it simply defines one in accordance within an arbitrarily determined set of expectations.

C. Long term interdisciplinary projects, such as a contemporary "Walk-about" that are presented to the school and community at large will be utilized. Students will state their learning goals and receive feedback concerning perceived attainment of goals. They would be encouraged to work with experts in their area of interest. Individually designed rites of passage that are meaningful to the student and her family and community will be designed.

The use of the Alpha essential learning skills self inventory will be utilized to help students become increasingly responsible for their own learning.(example follows).

The use of qualitative assessments, such as long narratives will be used as the basis for transporting record of student's learning. Many colleges are accepting this form of assessment and with student interviews find them to be informative.

Alpha
Essential Learning Skills

Effective Learners Think/Work Creatively & Critically

I am growing confident of my creative and critical abilities because I...

...plan a strategy to accomplish a task.
...adapt information and ideas to solve problems.
...inquire when I want to find out.
...use a variety of learning styles.
...present my work in a variety of ways.
...make predictions based on available information.
...apply my understanding and knowledge of the past.
...evaluate and interpret information.
...recognize concrete and abstract relationships.

Effective Learners Collaborate with Others

As part of my continuing development toward working collaboratively with others, I...

...respect other individual and cultural points of view.
...respond constructively to support others.
...compromise when appropriate.
...provide leadership.
...work to bring about successful resolution to a question.
...recognize when the group goal is more important than the individual goal.
...offer solutions and express my opinions constructively.
...communicate my needs.
make an effort to get to know the people I work with.

Effective Learners Communicate with Others

I am developing the ability to communicate because I..

...choose appropriate forms of communication.
...express myself orally.
...express myself visually.
...express myself through performance.
...express myself in writing.
...express my opinions.
...express myself logically/mathematically.
...express my feelings.
...listen and reflect on what is being communicated.

Effective Learners Function Independently

As part of my continuing development as an independent learner, I...

...assume responsibility for my own learning.
...am able to follow through on commitments.
...am challenged by new opportunities.
...have abilities and skills I am confident about.
...identify priorities and budget my time.
...learn from my successes and my mistakes.
...know how, when and where to ask for help.
...recognize skills and abilities that need improvement.
...take care of my personal, social, and emotional needs.

Alpha Learning Summaries, as adapted from the CSSD Essential Behaviors.

12.Accountability

A. The Board of Trustees will meet every other month and discuss the results of evaluations prepared prior to the meeting by staff, parents and students. Board members will regularly attend exhibitions of student mastery as well as inservice meetings of staff.The Board will oversee a regular cycle of planning, evaluation and reporting that includes participation by students, parents, staff and community. Again, the Center for Law and Education has valuable manuals on implementing feedback mechanisms for schools that involves all the players.

We also anticipate that the Secretary of Education would wish to observe our practice and give feedback.

B.We will use a variety of methods to evaluate teachers and staff.

1.We would expect the teacher and staff to keep a journal and reflect on own performance.

2.Peer assessment via formal and informal observation and interviews internally.

3.Questionnaires to be answered on an annual basis by students, parents and other members of the Assembly .

4.Peer assessment by observation and interview by outside professional colleagues.

5.Evaluation by the Board of Trustees

6.The student performance and overall climate of the school would also reflect on the teachers and staff.

Standards for teacher and staff performance will include, but are not limited to the following:

1.Ability to meet the students needs with appropriate curriculum, feedback and rolemodeling.

2.Ability to work well with parents

3.Ability to work with community and outside agencies

4.Ability to share decision making

5.Willingness to learn and change

6.Good team player

7.Ability to apply systems theory to teaching and learning

8.Good communication skills - can dialogue

9.Demonstrates knowledge of human development

10.Other criteria as they become evident

Results of these evaluations will be reviewed by the Board and the school at large to determine what action is appropriate.We regard all

assessments as a tool to improve performance and overall effectiveness of the school.

C.Parents of children and the community at large will be welcome to observe and ask questions.By maintaining a commitment to an on-going process of communication, we feel that we will demonstrate our intention to be accountable.

D.Annual audit by CPA and Quarterly review by Board of Trustees

E.We will prepare an Annual Report which will include a picture of our financial health, results of students performance and other requirements as set forth in M.G.L. c.71,s.89. We anticipate that this will be a function of the school administrator with oversight by the Board and the State.

13.Human Resource Information

A.Our Standards for Hiring are described as follows:

1.Demonstration of ability to be a positive role model; one who is worthy of emulation and who embodies the characteristics of a person who holds values in alignment with the ones we are trying to cultivate.

2.Knowledge and understanding of child and human development

3.Knowledge and understanding of how children learn.

4.Ability to design, plan and evaluate space.

5.Ability to develop appropriate curricula.

6.Awareness of the physical development of children and how it feeds into curriculum development.

7.Ability to explore child's view of the world by finding own child.

8.Ability to assess all levels of development of a child.

9.Ability to observe and evaluate behaviors and elicit appropriate behaviors.

10.Be a good storyteller

11.Ability to work equally and together with parents.

12. Certification is not expected or required ,however a demonstrated commitment to professional development is.

B.We anticipate the need for 1(one) administrator for all five years. The maximum student to teacher ratio is 25:1, however we anticipate that there will be part time teachers for things such as bilingual education and the Arts. We also intend to utilize parents and community members as their interests and abilities and our needs dictate.

C.We are already in the process of planning professional development for teachers and for parents. As stated earlier, Sambhava Luvmour is planning workshops here in July and Lynn Stoddard is available in April. Much of our curriculum and practice is informed by these leaders and we will want to ground all participants in their ideas. Our philosophy about professional development is that it is to be encouraged and supported. Teachers must see themselves as model learners. We would also like each teacher to develop inservice programs for colleagues that would also be available to surrounding communities. We would expect each employee to attend at least one workshop or course on an annual basis.

D. We will comply with all Federal and State labor laws. Our compensation package will include benefits that amount to

approximately 30% of salary. We have budgeted approximately $25,000 per year for full time teachers and staff to start. As part of our governance, it is the policy to decide the budget on an annual basis involving the whole school community (the Assembly)This is a form of democratic governance that we propose to start with as it fully humanizes the operational aspects of the school and requires a consciousness on the part of each individual to consider their role, their responsibilities and their rights. This is based on a practice at the Sudbury Valley School in operation for 25 years. It will be explained fully later on.

14. School Governance

A. We are very interested in the form of government used at the Sudbury Valley school It is based on New England Town Meeting form and will follow Robert's Rules of Order.. We will start with this and work with until it suits our needs. We hope to evolve towards a dialogue process that builds stronger communities.The Dialogue process is modeled by the MIT Dialogue project and seeks to create a place for higher level decision making

The Assembly: The membership of the corporation(school)shall be known collectively as the Assembly and shall be composed of the following persons:

1.The parent or legal guardian of each student in good standing under the age of 18. Membership begins after 2 months of attendance.
2.Persons on the staff of the school
3.Trustees
4.Public member,if any
5.Students in good standing who have attended the school for two months

There shall be no limits to the number of members of the Assembly

Meetings are held on an annual basis on the first Tuesday of June at 3pm or the next day if it was a legal holiday. Written notice will be given 7 days in advance. Special meetings can be called by the President, a majority of Trustees, or a majority of the Assembly members by written notice.

A quorum consists of 10 members of the corporation. and must be maintained to conduct business. Initially we will use majority vote, but plan to evolve to a consensus decision making process as our

dialogue skills grow. Each member has one vote and there is no proxy.

The Powers and Duties of the Assembly are outlined as follows:

1.The Assembly shall determine general policies of the corporation in fiscal matters;determine wage scales, fees, and the annual budget.
2.The Assembly shall elect Trustees and Officers
3.The Assembly may elect public members by a two-thirds vote which is for a term of one year
4.The Assembly may amend the by-laws

The Board of Trustees

The corporation(school) shall have a Board of Trustees consisting of no less than seven and no more than 20 elected members, serving for a term of one year,renewable by election. Officers of the corporation shall be ex-officio members of the Board. Vacancies due to resignation, death or incapacity will be filled by a majority vote of the Board.

The Board shall meet regularly as fixed by the Trustees.Notification of special meetings must be given in writing or telephone 4 days prior and may be called by the President or by two or more trustees. A quorum of five Trustees must be present to carry out business and decisions are by consensus. All meetings are open to the public.

Powers and Duties of the Board of Trustees

1.Evaluate school's program and operation
2.Propose plans for the future of the school
3.Make reports and recommendations to the Assembly
4.Oversee Annual report
5.Oversee school evaluation

Officers

Officers of the Corporation shall be a President, Secretary and Treasurer and are elected by the Assembly at the Annual meeting. Vacancies are filled by consensus of the Board of Trustees.

Powers and Duties

1.The President shall preside at all meetings of the Assembly, the Board of Trustees and all meetings of the School Meeting.
2.The Secretary shall be custodian of all records of the corporation not placed in the custody of the Treasurer
3.In the absence of either of the above a presiding officer will be temporarily elected.

4.The Treasurer shall keep in books of the corporation complete and accurate accounts of all monies, funds, and property of the corporation; shall have the care and custody of the money, funds, valuable papers, documents and other fiscal assets and encumbrances; shall exercise duties and powers ordinarily incident to this position in similar corporations.

The School Meeting

Membership shall consist of Teachers, Students and Staff. and will meet on a weekly basis as determined by its Rules.

Powers and Duties

1.The School Meeting shall implement the decisions of the Assembly and manage the day-to-day affairs of the school.

2.The School Meeting shall hire Staff and Teachers for a period of one year renewable annually.

3.The School Meeting may dismiss or suspend any member, however in doing so does not violate any State or Federal statutes INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS.

15. School Community

We have referred to ourselves as a collaborative learning community and have structured ourselves to promote and achieve that. Our community is built on a shared vision of individual development and fulfillment in the context of a community that cares about itself and its ability to be sustainable. This community extends from family to student to the teacher and school to the family again and outwards to the community and the world. We must also consider our relationship to the natural world, as well, for it will nourish us all.

We will strive to be a positive presence in the community, one that generates pride and satisfaction. Our way will be open and communicative .Many of the students will find rewarding activities to participate in through community organizations. We will encourage the development of relationships with service groups as well as museums and higher learning institutions. These relationships will be particularly meaningful as students find their idealism and develop their sense of what is important to them.It is important for them to have many positive adult role models in their lives.

One of the mainstays of this community will be our ability to communicate effectively with one another. Our plan is to adopt the practices developed in the Boston Urban Dialogue Project at MIT. Judy O'Brien worked on this project. Its purpose is to build shared vision. Bill Isaacs, the Director of the project said to describe this process:

"Human beings find it quite difficult to talk together seriously and creatively about different issues. Typically people take fixed positions and defend them, trading off views, seeking to win and avoiding losing. Dialogue is very different. It aims to establish a free exchange among large groups of people. It encourages people to explore their certainties and to examine the possibilities that often lies between polarized points of view. As an entire group begins to do this, the collective thinking pattern is free to move in entirely new ways. This kind of exchange holds the potential to produce new levels of creativity and collective intelligence".

We have described how parents will be integral parts of the life of the community and that there will be shared responsibility and decision-making. We anticipate that there will be many ways for parents/guardians and community members to be adult role models as well as co-learners. We would like to require each family to

volunteer three hours per week at the school. This can be individualized to meet parents' needs. Working parents also have this obligation. Parent participation means contributing in several ways. First with direct classroom assistance, second by attending a monthly parent meeting(one parent) and third through committee work, fundraising, office help, field trips, or work parties. This work will be vital to the life of the school and will go a long way to ensuring student success.

Accountability is extremely important, as teachers and students will be planning according to the commitments parents and community members have made.

Examples of parent and community help are:

- Work with a group of children under direction of the teacher
- Teach an activity which you plan that students have an interest in
- Do phone calling, typing or copying
- Lead tours of the school
- Help with maintenance
- Assist with preparing community meal
- Establish outdoor classroom
- Grants writing
- Share about your vocation or avocation
- Coordinate volunteer activities
- Coordinate carpooling
- Supervise lunch and recess so that staff gets a break

16.Replicability and District Relations

A.One of the major reasons that this group is putting forward a charter proposal is so that we may promote our ideas to other schools. We hope to legitimize our ideas further by offering them within the confines of a public school with rules and regulations to adhere to. Our model is replicable to the extent that one follows the same principles and practices that we do. This is no canned curriculum though and we cannot emphasize more that everything we do is based on serving the individual needs of each learner within the community. Therefore, much of what we model is transferable in terms of governance, and pedagogy, yet the flavor will be different because different people will be involved. As we have stated previously, we welcome observation and participation by outside districts. As we evolve, we could also serve as an internship site.

B.We are planning to institute a resource center to promote the understanding of child/human development and appropriate parenting/teaching models. Our goal would be to work with the community at large and not limit ourselves to the immediate school population. We will offer workshops and discussion groups and various resources for parents and teachers. This will take shape as we learn of the needs of parents, teachers and the community.

C. None at this time, yet we are eager to be in relationship. We will send an executive summary to the superintendent as well as school principals and set up meetings.

17. Building Site

Please see attached plan of the 4-H site in Ashland. Negotiations for the space have begun. We anticipate that all codes will be met and the only potential problem is handicap access to the second floor. This will be addressed.

18. Code of Conduct

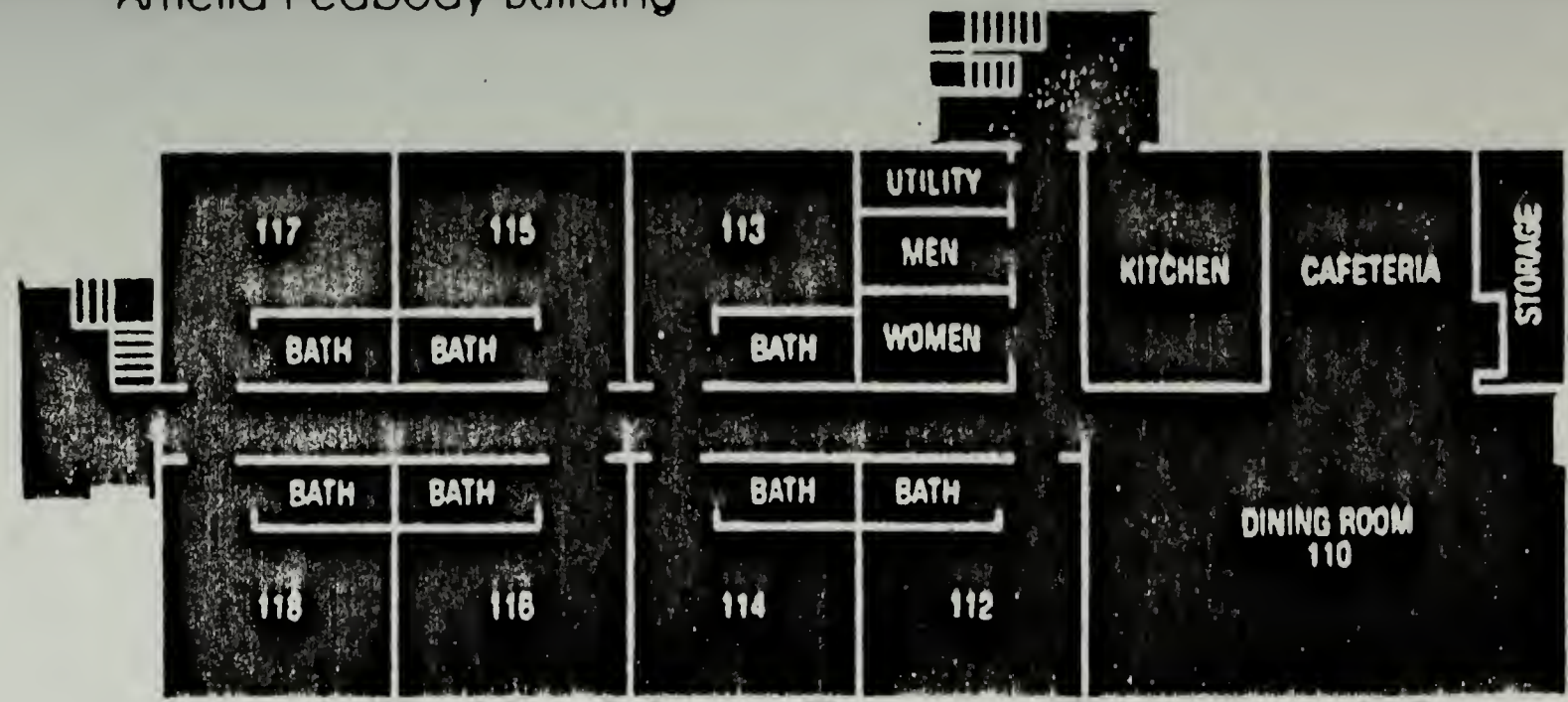
We are aware that there are new laws regulating the authority of the superintendent with regard to suspensions and expulsions. We will adhere to the guidelines set forth.in M.G.L. Ch.71 s.37H. Day to day codes of conduct will be decided by the members of the Assembly and implemented by the School Meeting laws to be established. In general it will be illegal to have alcohol,drugs or tobacco on the premises. This rule is for everyone. Basically anyone who chooses to commit to being part of this school must make a commitment to acting with respect and in a responsible manner.

19 Special Needs and Bilingual Needs

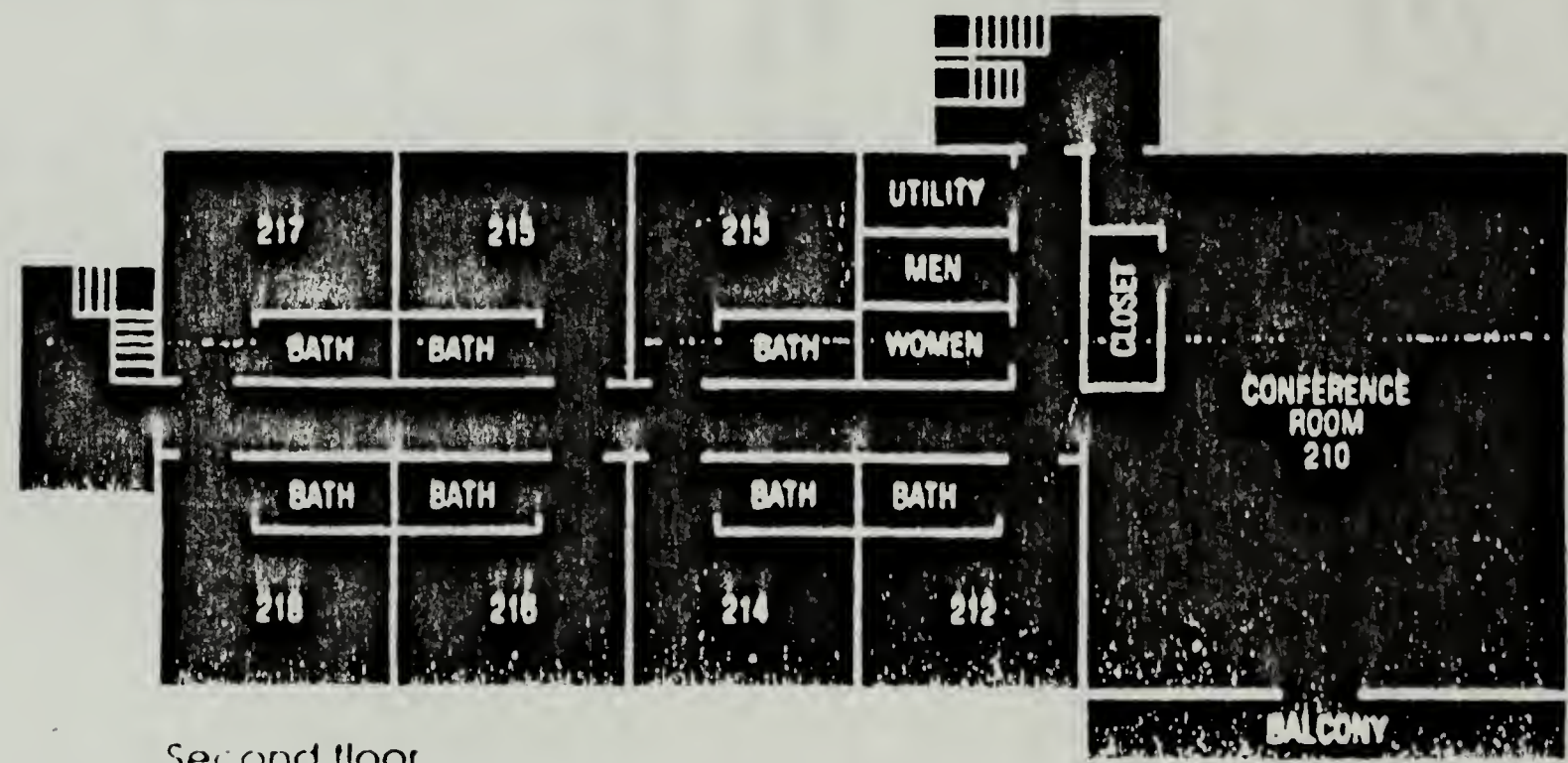
We believe that most special needs children will be successfully included in our program and we will work with parents to address any other perceived needs. We also would work with the sending district and contract out special services. The guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice and curriculum is applicable to children with special needs, but children will probably benefit more from expansions and modifications (guidelines outlined in Reaching Potentials,1992 Bredekamp and Rosegrant, editors)These guidelines clearly recognize the importance of individual differences and the need to adapt curriculum accordingly. In fact, investigating how to expand our practice will result in greater knowledge of children, with and without special needs.

We don't believe that a child in the early years who is not fluent will be at a serious disadvantage because we are creating such a natural learning environment. As the child becomes older though we acknowledge the need for a bilingual teacher to help bridge the communication gap between student and teacher and family and teacher. Development of thinking skills will occur in the primary language until the child has had adequate (5 years) immersion in English.

Amelia Peabody Building



First floor



Second floor

20. Budget

Please see attached.
A sum of $10,000 has been pledged for start up costs.We anticipate needing to pay an administrator a stipend starting in April and a stipend to teachers for the summer. We will need to obtain a loan for an additional $40K.

21. Transportation

We would make an agreeable arrangement with the school committee for in district students. Out of district students will be using carpooling as the primary mode of transportation. We have budgeted funds towards transportation costs and may be able to provide pick-up at strategic points.

22.Liability and Insurance

To be submitted upon receiving provisional charter status.

23.Governance Documents

To be submitted upon receiving provisional charter status.

Charter School Operating Budget

DESCRIPTION	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999
#students	50	75	100	100	125
REVENUES					
*Per pupil revenue	225000	337500	450000	450000	562500
Student Entitlements					
Grants	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000
TOTAL REVENUES	235000	347500	460000	460000	572500
EXPENSES					
Direct Student Costs:					
Transportation	6000	9000	12000	12000	15000
Supplies	2500	5000	10000	10000	12000
Computers and Materials	6000	9000	10000	10000	10000
Field Study	5000	7500	10000	10000	12500
Insurance Expense	10000	15000	20000	20000	22000
Total Direct Student Costs	29500	45500	62000	62000	71500
Personnel:					
Principal/Executive	25000	25000	30000	35000	35000
Teachers	50000	80000	120000	120000	150000
Clerical	13000	15000	18000	18000	20000
Custodians	10000	12000	12000	12000	15000
Benefits	30000	37000	54000	54000	66000
Staff Development	3500	5000	7500	7500	10000
Total Personnel	131500	174000	241500	246500	296000
Occupancy					
Rent	20000	20000	20000	20000	20000
Mortgage					
Maintenance	2000	2000	2000	3000	3000
Utilities	10000	11000	15000	15000	18000
Janitorial Supplies	700	1000	1000	1000	1500
Total Occupancy	32700	34000	38000	39000	42500
Office					
Supplies	1750	2000	3000	3000	4000
Equipment Rental/Maintenance	5000	6000	7000	7000	10000
Telephone/Communications	5000	6000	7000	7000	10000
Accounting & Payroll	6000	6000	7000	7000	8000
Printing and Copying	1300	2000	2000	2000	3000
Postage and Shipping	2500	3000	3000	3000	4000
Total Office	21550	25000	29000	29000	39000
Outreach/Resource Center	15000	50000	75000	75000	100000
Start-up costs	50000				
Total Expense	280250	328500	445500	451500	549000
Excess or Deficiency	-45250	19000	14500	8500	23500
Begining Fund Balance					
Ending Fund Balance	-45250	-26250	-11750	-3250	20250

*numbers based on per pupil of $4500, which is $500 less than target community but accounts for .possibly locating elsewhere. Number of students is not at maximum to take into account the possibility of low enrollment